ISSUE 9 | JULY 2012 | 1982~2012: 30 YEARS OF FIGHTING FANTASY!

Fighting Fantazine

THE FIGHTING FANTASY FAN MAGAZINE

FLOWCHARTS OF SUPREMACY!

MORE GAMEBOOK PLANNING IN THE ADVENTURE GAME

THE BROKEN DIARY

IAN MILLER TALKS ABOUT HIDING THINGS BEHIND TREES AND OTHER STORIES

DEEP INTO THE DUNGEON!

THE FACT OF FICTION IS SELECTED TO ENTER THE DEATHTRAP DUNGEON IN SEARCH OF ANSWERS

PLUS A BRAND NEW **BUMPER** FIGHTING FANTASY ADVENTURE!

CAN YOU FACE A RETURN TO THE ICEFINGER MOUNTAINS?

GAMEBOOK
ADVENTURES
www.gamebookadventures.com

INFINITE
UNIVERSE

TEMPLE OF THE
SPIDER GOD

JUDGE
DREDD
COMING SOON

Judge Dredd ®
and © Rebellion A/S.
Used under license.
www.2000adonline.com

Judge Dredd artwork
by Clint Langley

INFINITE
UNIVERSE
Latest release

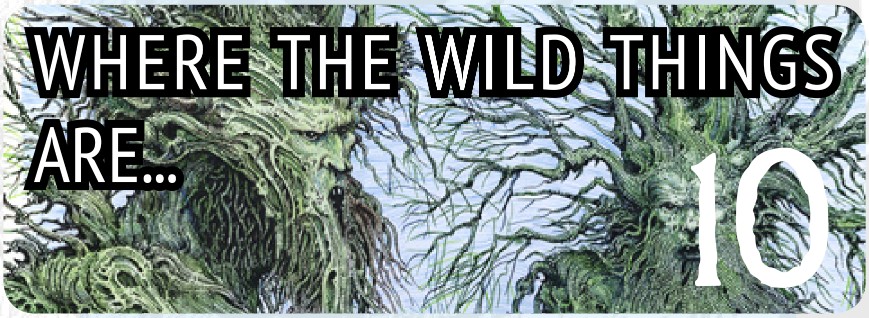
TEMPLE OF THE
SPIDER GOD
Written by gamebook veteran
Jonathan Green

Available now on iPhone, iPod Touch, iPad,
Android Smart Phones and Tablets!
Coming soon to Mac & PC

Available on the
App Store

Fighting Fantazine

ISSUE 9
JULY 2012



WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE... 10

RETURN TO THE ICEFINGER MOUNTAINS 24

DEATHTRAP DUNGEON 94

OTHERS

76 AFF MINI ADVENTURE: THE HUNT FOR THE BLACK WHALE PART 1
84 THE ADVENTURE GAME PART 3
90 THE RISE AND FALL AND RISE OF GAMEBOOKS IN GERMANY

REGULARS

04 LETTER FROM THE EDITOR
101 THE ARCANE ARCHIVE
102 FIGHTING DANTASY

Turn to paragraph **1**.

INTERVIEW:

Fighting Fantazine gets to grips with artist **Ian Miller** about his contributions to the gamebooks, as well as his thoughts of art and life in general...

MINI ADVENTURE:

by **Ed Jolley**
Illustrated by **Brett Schofield**

Thirty years ago the Snow Witch was preparing to unleash an ice age upon Titan when her plans were thwarted by a wandering adventurer. YOU were one of the slaves freed in the wake of her defeat, and have lived a quiet life since then. But when the horrors of your past start to catch up with you again, you must go back to the caves from which you escaped. Can the Snow Witch really be returning? And if so, do you have what it takes to stop her?

THE FACT OF FICTION:

Stepping into the darkness that is **Ian Livingstone**'s favourite dungeon, what things in the shadows might you have missed whilst trying to stay alive?

STAFF

Editor
Alexander Ballingall
editor@fightingfantazine.co.uk
www.twitter.com/gallicus
News Editor
Guillermo Paredes
Out of the Pit Editor
Andrew Wright
Adventure Editor
Demian Katz

Front Cover Artwork
Brett Schofield
Back Cover Artwork
Michael Wolmarans

With thanks to: Adrien Maudet, Ian Miller, and Neil Rennison. "A trail of mud runs across the path from the stream to the dark cave-mouth."

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

editor@fightingfantazine.co.uk

Welcome back everyone for another issue of *Fighting Fantasy*-related goodies. Things are afoot in all directions as the anniversary train rumbles on and *Blood of the Zombies* edges closer to being physically in our hands. How quickly do you think you'll find yourself at a classic "Your Adventure ends here" paragraph?

So what is going on? Beyond this magazine, a teaser for a documentary on the *Fighting Fantasy* phenomenon has surfaced on Youtube, the Kindle releases from Worldweaver continue, and *Advanced Fighting Fantasy* continues to develop (both in English and now in French). So while the book front remains at a disappointingly low figure of 1 title this year, the *Fighting Fantasy* range is by no means inactive!

As we look forward to our tenth (tenth!) issue later this year, the magazine continues to look for ways to improve. One of these is influenced by the fact that outside of *Fighting Fantasy* the gamebook genre is alive and well, as reflected by the bulging news section and our slowly diversifying reviews section. It is to this growth that I pitch the following question: Would YOU the reader like to see more material (articles, mini adventures, interviews, etc.) in this magazine about those non-*Fighting Fantasy* gamebook ranges? Don't hesitate to use the email address list at the top of the page and let me know wither way!

Meanwhile we are keeping up our push to explore *Fighting Fantasy* in all its myriad facets. This issue we've got a sequel to *Caverns of the Snow Witch* in Ed Jolley's mini adventure and a nautical *Advanced Fighting Fantasy* tale from Andrew Wright (illustrated by popular artists Brett Schofield and Michael Wolmarans respectively). Following on from our look into how the French received *Fighting Fantasy* (take a look back in issue #3), this issue we turn to the German translations. Which brings me to the following query: If you are interested in penning an article on the translations of *Fighting Fantasy* into another language, get in touch!

The features "The Fact of Fiction" and "The Adventure Game" are back once more this issue to peer behind the pages at mechanics and inspirations, and many of the regular items that are missing from this issue due to space considerations will be back in the following issue, rest assured!

Finally we have our usual interview slot, this time filled by the affable Ian Miller. Speaking of interviews, we've writer Paul Mason lined up for the next one with a few, hopefully nice, surprises in store.

Till then, sit back and enjoy.

Alex

Fighting Fantazine – The Fighting Fantasy Fan Magazine • Issue 9. Published July 2012.
Published three to four times a year.

WEBSITE: http://www.fightingfantazine.co.uk/
BLOG: http://fightingfantazine.blogspot.com/

CONTRIBUTIONS: Contributions to the fanzine in the form of letters, articles, reviews, fanfiction, artwork, comics et cetera are welcomed and readily invited.

NEXT DEADLINE: **August 17th 2012**

All *Fighting Fantasy* material is © Steve Jackson, Ian Livingstone, Wizard Books 2012. All other material is © **Fighting Fantazine – The Fighting Fantasy Fan Magazine** and the individual writers and artists unless otherwise indicated. **Fighting Fantazine – The Fighting Fantasy Fan Magazine** is a not-for-profit fanzine and no attempt has been made to supersede the copyrights held by Wizard Books, Steve Jackson, Ian Livingstone or any other persons or organisations. No similarity between any of the fictional names, characters persons and/or institutions herein with those of any living or dead persons or institutions is intended and any such similarity is purely coincidental. The views expressed in this fan publication (**Fighting Fantazine – The Fighting Fantasy Fan Magazine**) are those of the credited writers and do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor. Nothing may be reproduced by any means in whole or part without written permission of the publishers. All letters sent to this fanzine will be considered for publication, but the publishers cannot be held responsible for unsolicited manuscripts, photographs or artwork. Where possible, permission from the artists has been sought for the reproduction of *Fighting Fantasy* art. If you have any queries about this, please contact the Editor. © 2012

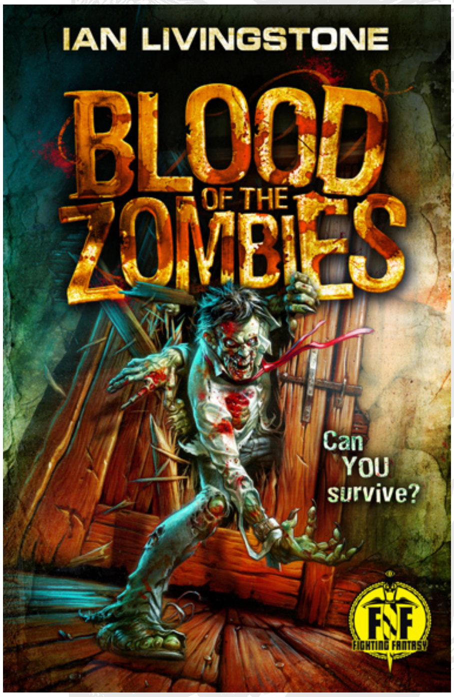
compiled by
GUILLERMO PAREDES

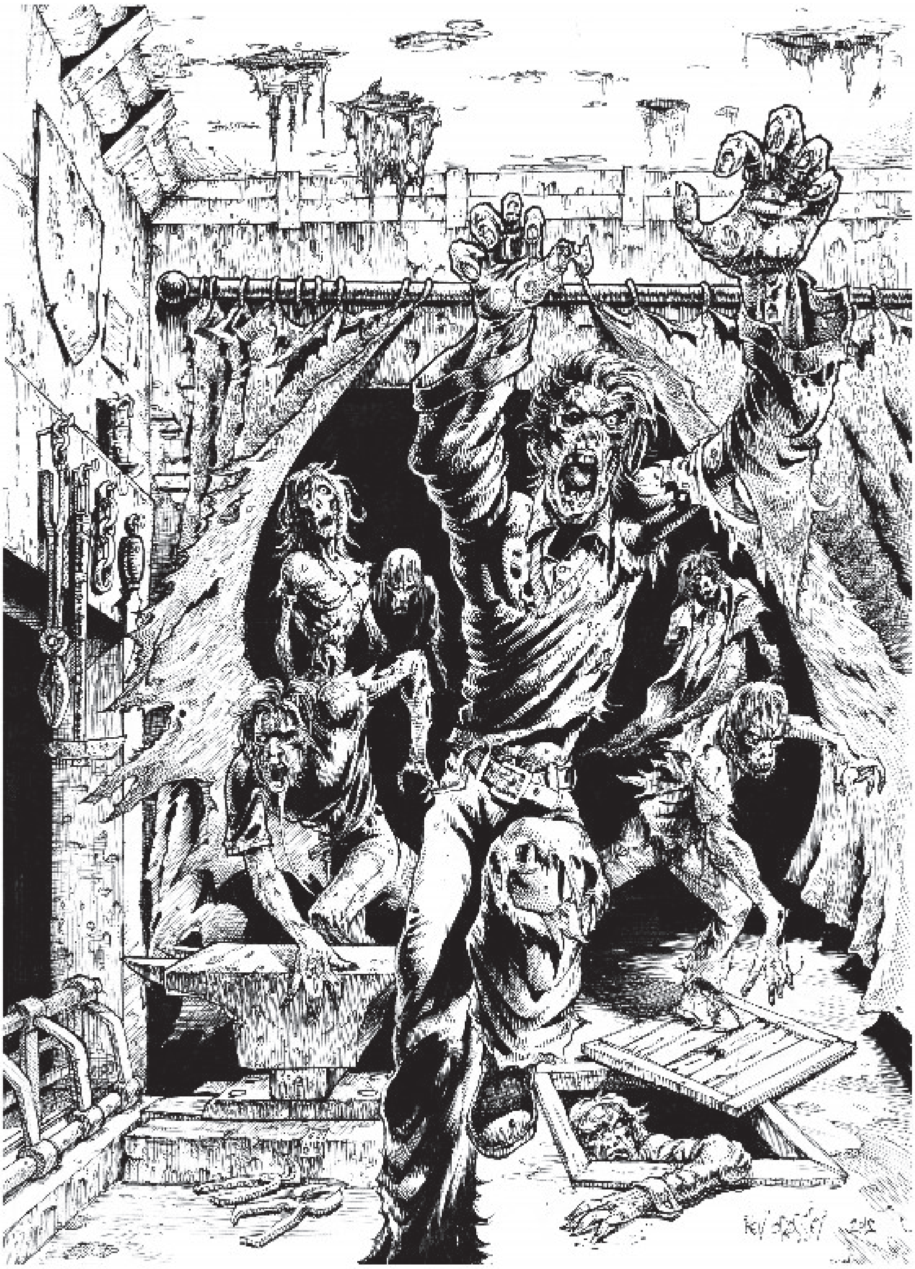
OMENS & AUGURIES

ALL THE LATEST NEWS FROM EVERY CORNER OF TITAN AND BEYOND!

FIGHTING FANTASY BRAND GOES OLD SCHOOL!

Undoubtedly the most important news of the year for *Fighting Fantasy* fans is the release of an all-new gamebook by classic author Ian Livingstone. *Blood of the Zombies* will be available on August 2nd 2012, in time for the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the *Fighting Fantasy* series (August 27th for those who are keeping track of these things). The cover art is by Greg Staples and the interior art by Kevin Crossley, both newcomers to the *Fighting Fantasy* series. What's more, the book will feature a "retro" design reminiscent of the early *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks. The paper version of this zombie horror gamebook will bear a price tag of 7.99 GBP. No word as yet on any futher reprints for the range.



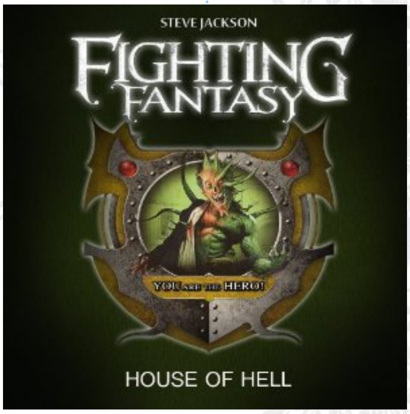


Livingstone meanwhile will be at the Forbidden Planet megastore in London (Shaftesbury Avenue) on August 4th (3pm~4pm) to sign copies of the book.

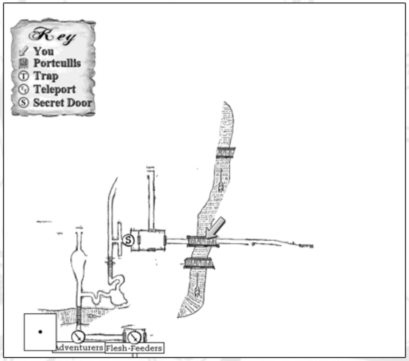
Simultaneously with the release of the paper version of the book, there will be Android and iOS versions of the books available courtesy of Tin Man Games, of *Gamebook Adventures* fame.

This release is part of a deal that will see Tin Man Games release electronic versions of several classic *Fighting Fantays* titles. Steve Jackson's *House of Hell* will be the first *Fighting Fantasy* rerelease done by this company.

OTHER FF DEVELOPEMENTS



Last issue we mentioned that Epic Games had purchased the rights to make iOS adaptations of four classic *Fighting Fantasy* books. However, it turns out this was no ordinary licensing agreement. The company acquired the rights for *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain*, *The Citadel of Chaos*, *Deathtrap Dungeon* and *Armies of Death*, then gave each book to a different game studio for development as part of a competition. Each studio was instructed to develop a game that constituted a reimagining of the original book, with the best proposal getting a license to publish another game using the Unreal Engine 3 license.



As a result of the above, the four adaptations vary widely among themselves. Details are sketchy at this time, but it appears that the adaptation of *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* is a computer RPG including all-new material, the conversion of *The Citadel of Chaos* is a first-person action game, the adaptation of *Deathtrap Dungeon* is a stealth game in the tradition of *Thief: the Dark Project*, and the new *Armies of Death* is a real-time strategy game that will put the player in the shoes of the undead general Agglax. The games debuted at the competition hosted by Epic Games during the 2012 Gadget Show Live held in April in Birmingham, England. Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone acted as judges and determined *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain: Lost Chapters* to be the best entry in the competition.

Regardless of the result, all four games will be released for iOS devices during the year. We will give you more details on these games as soon as they become available.

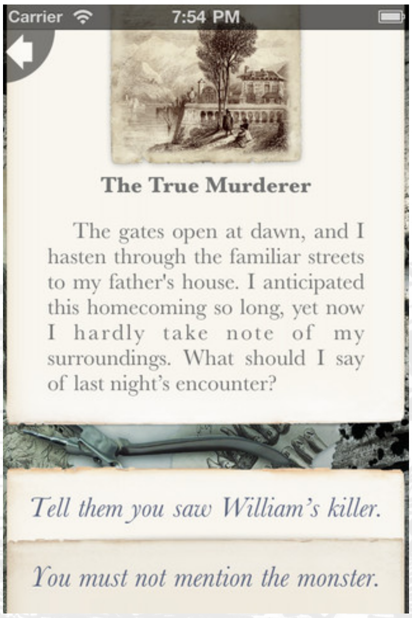
Meanwhile, Megara Entertainment have published an iOS version of the *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook *The Keep of the Lich Lord*. This version has been adapted to the *Fabled Lands* universe created by co-writer Dave Morris. You can download this app for 5.99 USD from the iTunes store.

Worldweaver has released its own adaptation of *House of Hell* for the Amazon Kindle. The book is only available to US customers. Their adaptation of *Creature of Havoc* (see map image) should become available soon.

The multiplayer tabletop version of Steve Jackson's *Sorcery!* gamebook series is now available from Arion Games at a price tag of 16.99 GBP. This product requires the second edition of the *Advanced Fighting Fantasy* RPG (available from the same publisher) to play. Plans are now afoot for a new version of the *Advanced Fighting Fantasy* title *Blacksand!* to appear in early 2013 and an appeal has been made for financial help. You can donate money to get the project going here: www.indiegogo.com/AFFBlacksand

Finally in the realm of *Fighting Fantasy*, artist Gary Mayes (*Rebel Planet*, *Robot Commando*, *Star Strider*) is selling artwork from his contributions to the series. These are being sold via Jamie Fry (myworld.ebay.com/fightingfantasycollector/?_trksid=p4340.l2559) on his eBay account. Prices start at £50 per piece.

FRANKENSTEIN



The True Murderer

The gates open at dawn, and I hasten through the familiar streets to my father's house. I anticipated this homecoming so long, yet now I hardly take note of my surroundings. What should I say of last night's encounter?

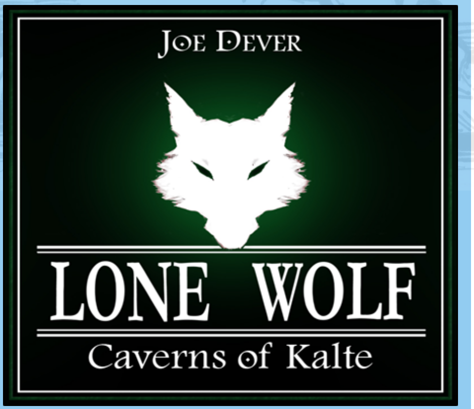
Tell them you saw William's killer.

You must not mention the monster.

Dave Morris' interactive retelling of the classic horror novel *Frankenstein* is now available for iOS devices. This book involves the reader in the events of the original story and allows him or her to explore the philosophical reflections present in the book. *Frankenstein* is available for 4.99 USD from the iTunes store.

LONE WOLF

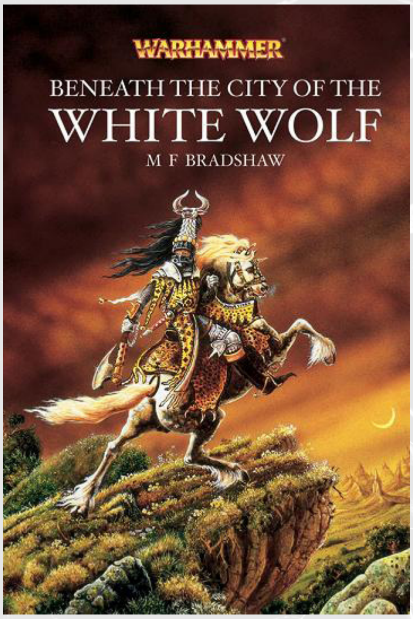
Mongoose publishing has announced the release of books 18 and 19 in the *Lone Wolf* series, *Dawn of the Dragons* and *Wolf's Bane*. The books will be released in August and September 2012, respectively. This company also plans to publish paperback editions of the first five *Lone Wolf* gamebooks, beginning in August. Worldweaver has also announced it will release a Kindle version of the third *Lone Wolf* gamebook, *The Caverns of Kalte*. We will give you more detail when it becomes available.



BLACK LIBRARY

The Black Library continues to keep the flame of gamebooks alive. They have released their first *Warhammer Fantasy* gamebook, *Beneath the City of the White Wolf*. According to the publisher's website, in this book:

> *You are Absalom Kross, a devoted member of the Knights Panther, a sect of fanatical warriors who make up the honour guard of Boris Todbringer, Count of Middenheim. You are dedicated to the Count's protection and the defence of the City of the White Wolf.*
>
> *While out in the forest surrounding the city, you uncover evidence of a plot to destroy Middenheim from within and are dispatched to bring its perpetrators to justice. Armed only with wits, brawn and your trusty blade, you must battle past some of the fiercest monsters in the Old World to save the city from certain doom.*



The book can be purchased at a price of 19.99 USD from the Black Library website (www.blacklibrary.com/Warhammer/beneath-the-city-of-the-white-wolf.html).

JONATHAN GREEN

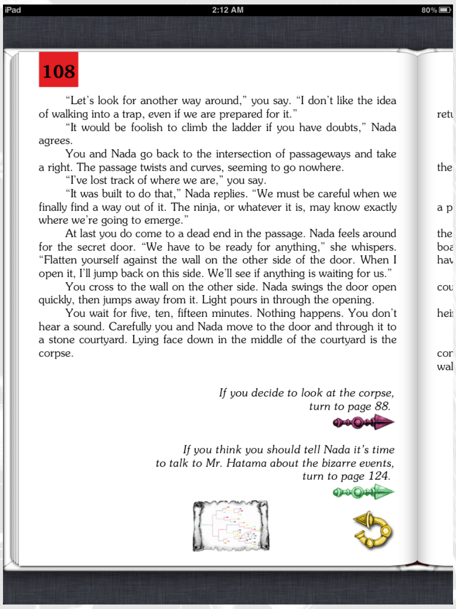
Fighting Fantasy author Jonathan Green has kept himself busy in the gamebook world lately. In the course of the last month he has given us two adventure gamebooks. *Warlock's Bounty* is a fantasy game which combines the gamebook format with card gaming a la *Magic: the Gathering*. This gamebook, which is only available for Android devices, can be obtained at the Google Play store.

HERALD OF OBLIVION
JONATHAN GREEN
WARHAMMER
40,000
A PATH TO VICTORY GAMEBOOK

The second item by Green is a gamebook set in the *Warhammer 40,000* universe titled *Herald of Oblivion*. This book captures the feel of the old miniatures game *Space Hulk* in that the protagonist is a Space Marine trying to escape from an alien-infested spaceship. The book is available for 19.99 USD from the Black Library website (www.blacklibrary.com/all-products/herald-of-oblivion.html).

Green is also reportedly working on a *Warhammer Fantasy* gamebook titled *Shadow Over Sylvania*, which should see the light of day before the end of the year.

CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE



108

"Let's look for another way around," you say. "I don't like the idea of walking into a trap, even if we are prepared for it."

"It would be foolish to climb the ladder if you have doubts," Nada agrees.

You and Nada go back to the intersection of passageways and take a right. The passage twists and curves, seeming to go nowhere.

"I've lost track of where we are," you say.

"It was built to do that," Nada replies. "We must be careful when we finally find a way out of it. The ninja, or whatever it is, may know exactly where we're going to emerge."

At last you do come to a dead end in the passage. Nada feels around for the secret door. "We have to be ready for anything," she whispers. "Flatten yourself against the wall on the other side of the door. When I open it, I'll jump back on this side. We'll see if anything is waiting for us."

You cross to the wall on the other side. Nada swings the door open quickly, then jumps away from it. Light pours in through the opening.

You wait for five, ten, fifteen minutes. Nothing happens. You don't hear a sound. Carefully you and Nada move to the door and through it to a stone courtyard. Lying face down in the middle of the courtyard is the corpse.

If you decide to look at the corpse,
turn to page 88.

If you think you should tell Nada it's time
to talk to Mr. Hatama about the bizarre events,
turn to page 124.

This classic series has also made the jump to digital formats with a whopping ten titles now available for iOS devices. The classic gamebooks being rereleased are *The Abominable Snowman*, *Journey Under the Sea*, *Space and Beyond*, *The Lost Jewels of Nabooti*, *Mystery of the Maya*, *House of Danger*, *Race Forever*, *Cup of Death*, *Terror on the Titanic* and *Secret of the Ninja*. Each of these can be obtained for 5.99 USD from the iTunes store.

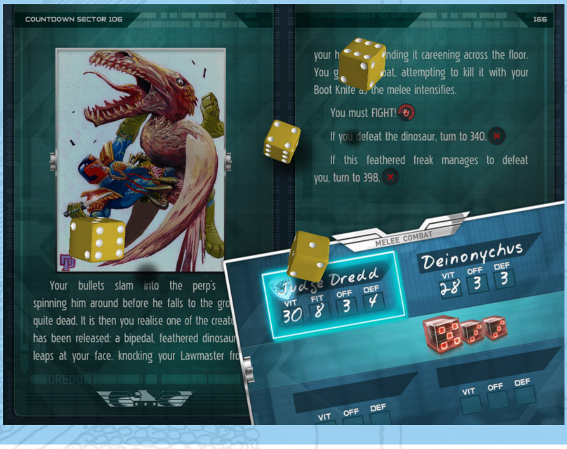
CHOICE OF GAMES

Choice of Games have released a new superhero-themed gamebook, titled *Heroes Rise: The Prodigy*. This game offers a rather humorous and cynical take on superhero stories. The book, like all other Choice of Games interactive books, is available for a variety of platforms, like Android, iOS, Kindle, Palm, and the Chrome Web Store.

TIN MAN GAMES

This publisher have been putting a lot of effort into widening the user base of their electronic gamebooks. Their first four adventure gamebooks, *An Assassin in Orlandes*, *The Siege of the Necromancer*, *Slaves of Rema* and *Revenant Rising* are now available for Android Devices, and the first of these books is also available for PC and Mac through web distributor Desura.

Things appear to be chugging along nicely and the first Judge Dredd electronic gamebook by Tin Man, titled *Judge Dredd: Countdown Sector 106*, will see the light of day sometime this year. Visit tinmangames.com.au/blog/ to read more info and peek at a few screenshots.



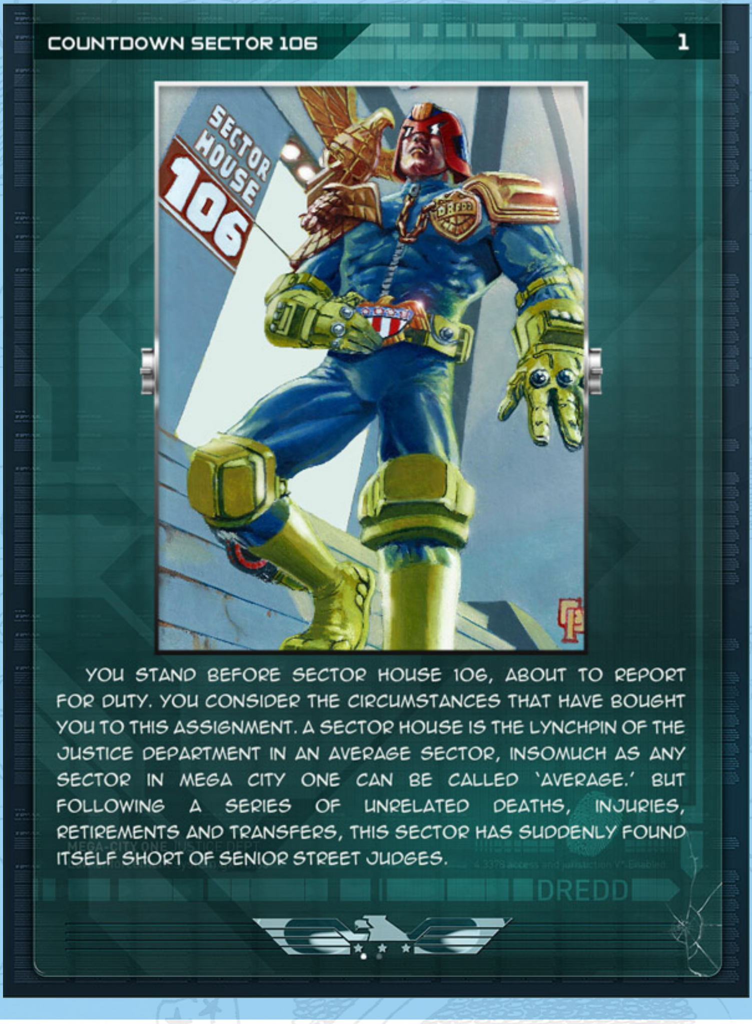
Your bullets slam into the perp's spinning him around before he falls to the gro quite dead. It is then you realise one of the creat has been released: a bipedal, feathered dinosau leaps at your face, knocking your Lawmaster fro

your h nding it careening across the floor. You g oat, attempting to kill it with your Boot Knife the melee intensifies.

You must FIGHT!

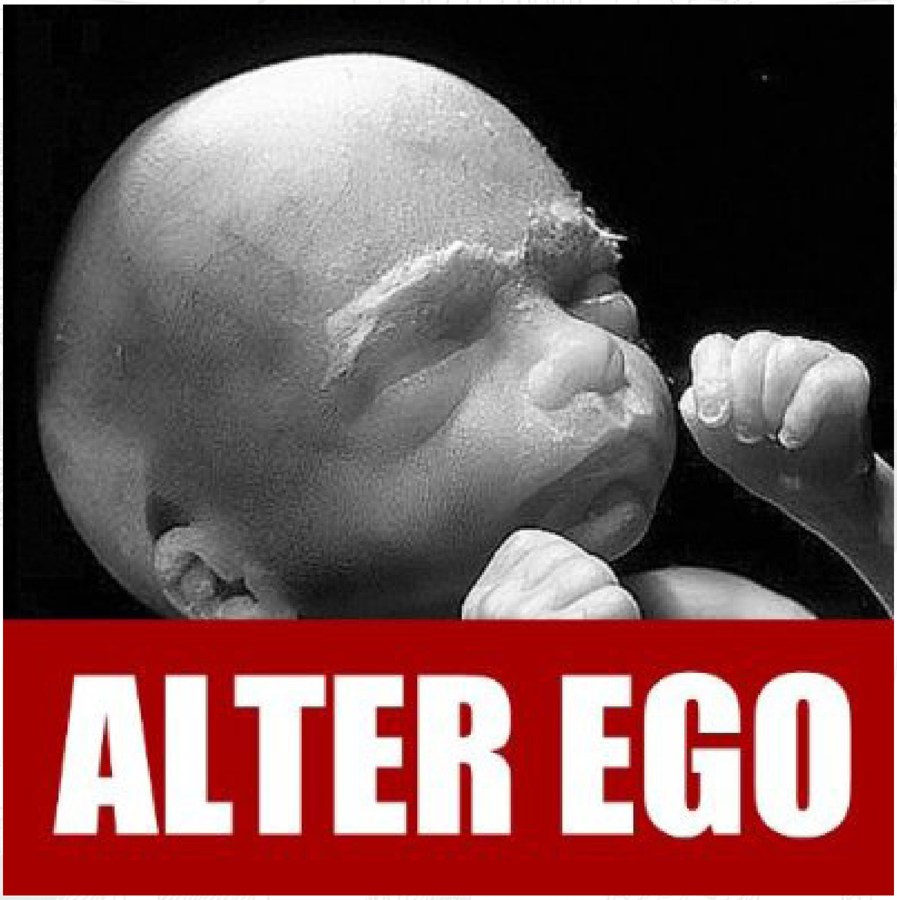
If you defeat the dinosaur, turn to 340.

If this feathered freak manages to defeat you, turn to 398.



YOU STAND BEFORE SECTOR HOUSE 106, ABOUT TO REPORT FOR DUTY. YOU CONSIDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT HAVE BOUGHT YOU TO THIS ASSIGNMENT. A SECTOR HOUSE IS THE LYNCHPIN OF THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT IN AN AVERAGE SECTOR, INSOMUCH AS ANY SECTOR IN MEGA CITY ONE CAN BE CALLED 'AVERAGE.' BUT FOLLOWING A SERIES OF UNRELATED DEATHS, INJURIES, RETIREMENTS AND TRANSFERS, THIS SECTOR HAS SUDDENLY FOUND ITSELF SHORT OF SENIOR STREET JUDGES.

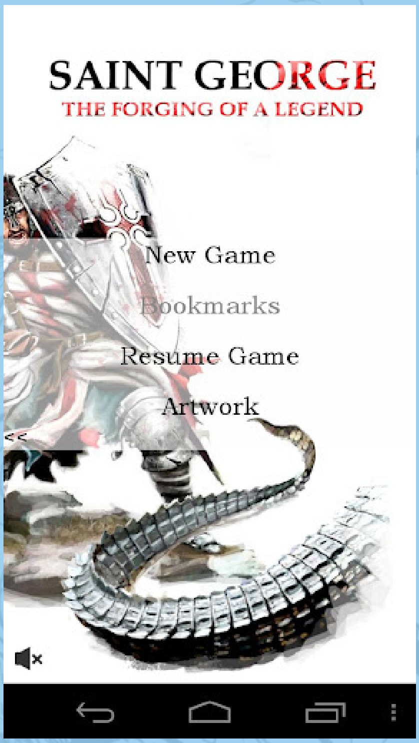
ALTER EGO



Alter Ego is a new gamebook for the Amazon Kindle. According to the blurb at Amazon:

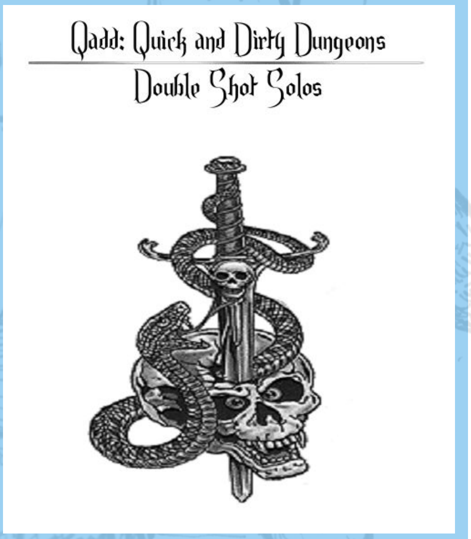
> *What if you could live your life over again? In* Alter Ego*, you can find out. In this text-based interactive fiction, you choose what happens next. It's in the style of choose-a-path books, but with over a thousand multiple-choice questions, it's much longer and deeper than traditional gamebooks.* Alter Ego *starts at birth and ends at death, including two substantially different versions, depending on whether you choose to be male or female.*
>
> *Will you grow up to be confident and happy? Will you fight with bullies, or befriend them? Will you find a date to the senior prom? Will you marry and have kids, or start your own business and become a millionaire? The choice is yours. If you enjoy interactive novels, you'll love* Alter Ego*. This game will change your life.*

MISCELLANEOUS GAMEBOOKS


SAINT GEORGE
THE FORGING OF A LEGEND
New Game
Bookmarks
Resume Game
Artwork

Spanish developer Gamebook Experience has released their first gamebook for Android devices, titled *Saint George: the Forging of a Legend*. This fantasy gamebook is available for free in English, Spanish and Catalan. The book will be followed by another fantasy gamebook titled *They Came from the Sea*.

There have two solo adventure books released for the *Quick and Dirty Dungeons RPG* system. The first of them is titled *Duck Soup*, while the other is an omnibus titled *Double Shot Solos*. Each of these can be found at www.rpgnow.com for 0.50 USD.


Qadd: Quick and Dirty Dungeons
Double Shot Solos

OTHER LANGUAGES

The seventh book in the German-language gamebook series, *Dschungel der Ungeheuer* (*Monsters in the Jungle*) is now available for 9.99 EUR.

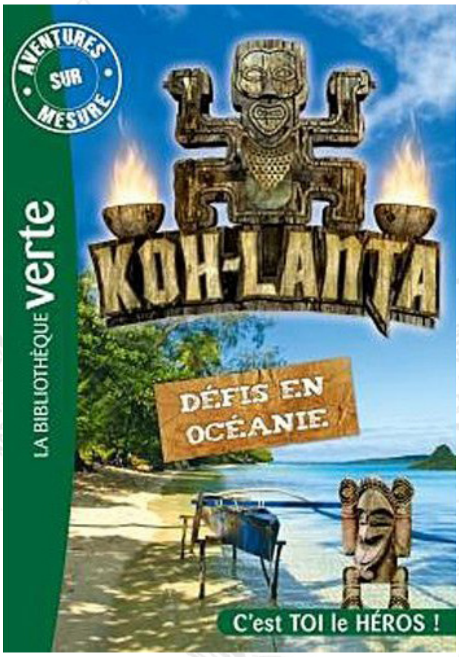
Jens Schumacher
DIE WELT DER 1000 ABENTEUER
Dschungel der Ungeheuer
DU entscheidest!

Be sure also to check out the fourth issue of the French magazine *Revue Heros*. As in every issue of this magazine, it contains three gamebook adventures done by dedicated fans. The issue costs 7.00 EUR and can be purchased along with previous issues at www.legrimoire.net/store/fr/

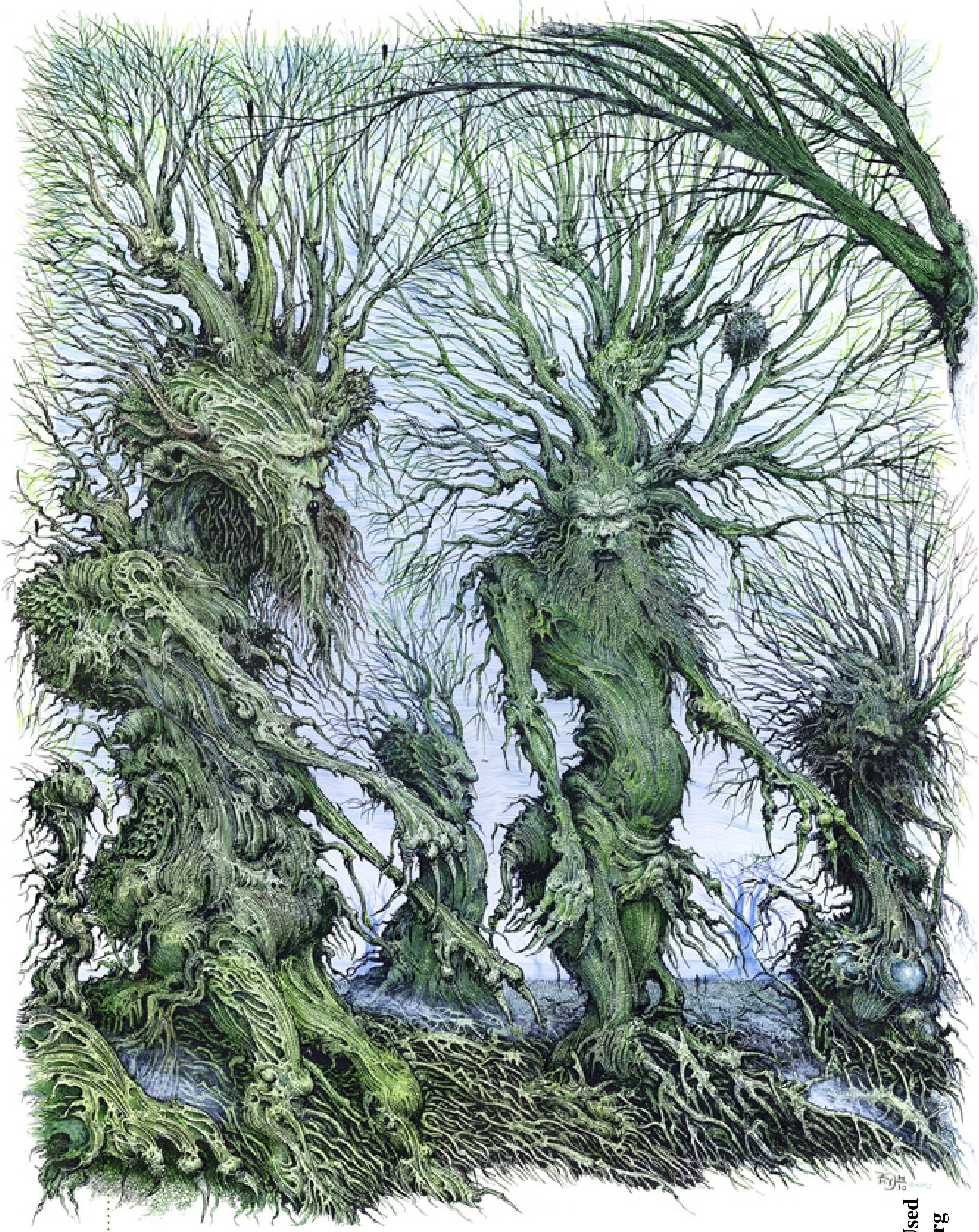
Speaking of French-language products, next August we will be seeing a French gamebook based on the *Survivor* reality TV show. *Koh-Lanta, Defis en Oceanie* will be available for 5.70 EUR.

There are also two new fantasy gamebooks available in French, titled *Les Terres Maudites* (*The Cursed Lands*) and *Les Legions du Mal* (*The Legions of Evil*). Each book is available for 8.95 CDN from the publisher's website at www.ada-inc.com/a-vous-de-jouer-2-les-terres-maudites-tome-1.html and www.ada-inc.com/a-vous-de-jouer-2-tome-2.html. The first book is temporarily available at a discounted price of 2.95 CDN.

FF


AVENTURES SUR MESURE
LA BIBLIOTHÈQUE verte
KOH-LANTA
DÉFIS EN OCÉANIE
C'est TOI le HÉROS !

HÉROS
La revue dont vous êtes le héros
6 €
Trois aventures Complètes !
GILLES SAINT-MARTIN
Fabuleux trésor
Cédric ZAMPINI
L'étreinte immortelle
Alexis RAVEL
La der des ders
Heroic Fantasy/Policier/Fantastique/Science-Fiction/...
Les éditions Céléphaïs



Above: Ent. Private commission for Darla Wilshire, USA (2009).

His style of drawing is incredibly distinctive, even against the wide variety on offer as part of the Fighting Fantasy *range.* Fighting Fantazine *was fortunate enough to catch up at the start of the new year with artist* ***Ian Miller*** *to ask him a few questions about life, art, and gamebooks. His answers are as unique as his art. Read on...*

DESCRIPTION OF SELF

Can you tell us something of your childhood and background?

Even at fifty-five / sixty-one / sixty-five, my childhood is still very much with me and I'm not sure where the so called adult, not forgetting the raucous and uncouth adolescent sandwiched in between, took over. I choose to view the whole matter as something of an accommodation of unruly elements and leave it at that.

My mother worked for one of the leading theatrical costumiers in London during the early part of the fifties, so I was from the outset caught up, so to speak, in the most intimate workings of the Illusion Machine. Not many young boys knew about the inflatable bra of a particular Hollywood star and the problem of its wayward valves. No sir.

My toy chests overflowed with the cast offs and oddments from a score of film and theatre productions, and all these years on I often wonder what happened to those chests. Maybe the unsolicited kiss that old crone gave me on the long seat of the red bus in Whalley Range has something to do with it?

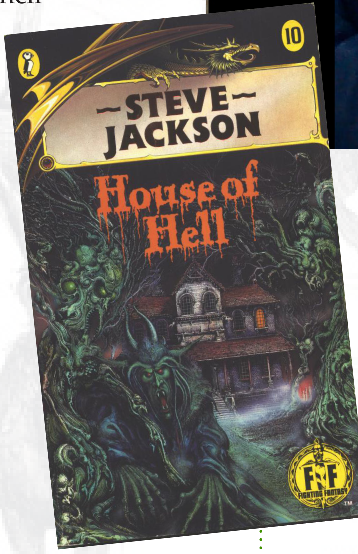
I was mesmerised by the sheer flurry of it all and receptive to everything that was weird and wonderful. Fact and Fiction were very much in contention and strange worlds could still be reached through the backs of cupboards, if you knew where to look. Bubble gum was made from everglades swamp water and that was a fact.

On my sixth birthday I was given a set of twelve coloured pencils with a different colour at each end. The

Art & Photos: © Ian Miller, 2012. Used with permission. Visit ian-miller.org

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE...

vivid quality of the colours was quite startling and even now, all these years on, I can still remember the excitement they aroused in me. Their arrival prompted my 'Ancient Egyptian Phase'. Frontality, Hieroglyphic pillars, pyramids and Ancient Egyptians were all that mattered. It must have been the desert yellow that started it. But whatever the reason, sand, asps, stripped towels, palm trees and pyramids, filled the pages of my drawing books until every one of those twelve pencils was all used up. That was a very sad day for me, because it also marked the demise of Joey my rubber clown hot water bottle. In a fit of pique Winky my brother's crippled crow savaged Joey and pecked out his eyes. In between the tears, and wishing the foul bird dead, I put the sightless clown in a biscuit tin along with the pencil stumps and buried them in the garden.



However I soon found other things to occupy me. I started lighting fires behind the Velvet drapes in the Lounge. This was not an act of vandalism you understand, but more an attempt to re-enact the Teepee-style living of the American Plains Indians. Happily the Teepee phase was short lived and I was soon drawing again; anything to do with Red Indians. When I discovered my inability to draw horses that did not look like giant Alsatian dogs I forsook the Plains Indians for the foot-padding Hurons and the backwoods country of James Fenimore Cooper.

Then I got a set of poster paints in a cardboard box, eight pots of assorted colours with a real paintbrush. Up until this time I had suffered the indignities of globby school powder paint which you mixed and applied with mini yard brushes. For the first time I was able to paint with some degree of precision and I never looked back. After my problem with the Alsatians, I determined there would be no more set backs where draftsmanship was concerned. If I couldn't draw it, I put a tree in front of it and have continued to do so ever since.

What is real? I remember someone, possibly the art historian Herbert Read, saying something to the effect that reality is not the four walls of the room we sit in nor the view through the window, but rather a stability of mind. If there was more to this statement, if indeed it was ever uttered at all, then I have forgotten it and in the best tradition of the half remembered I court the confusion and move on.

I remember whilst travelling to Manchester on a steam train seeing a herd of headless cows from my carriage window. When I mentioned it to the other occupants of the carriage they just smiled and said such things where common place in the North of England. A couple of years ago I wrote a poem about these childhood experiences:

1952 - London / Manchester train / herd of cows, in field near Rugby.

I saw a Headless cow,
In a field near Rugby.
I was amazed.
I told everybody—
They just smiled and said nothing,
A few said,
Of course you did.

Bastards!

They told me Bubble Gum was made with swamp water from the Everglades,
I believed them—

Bastards!

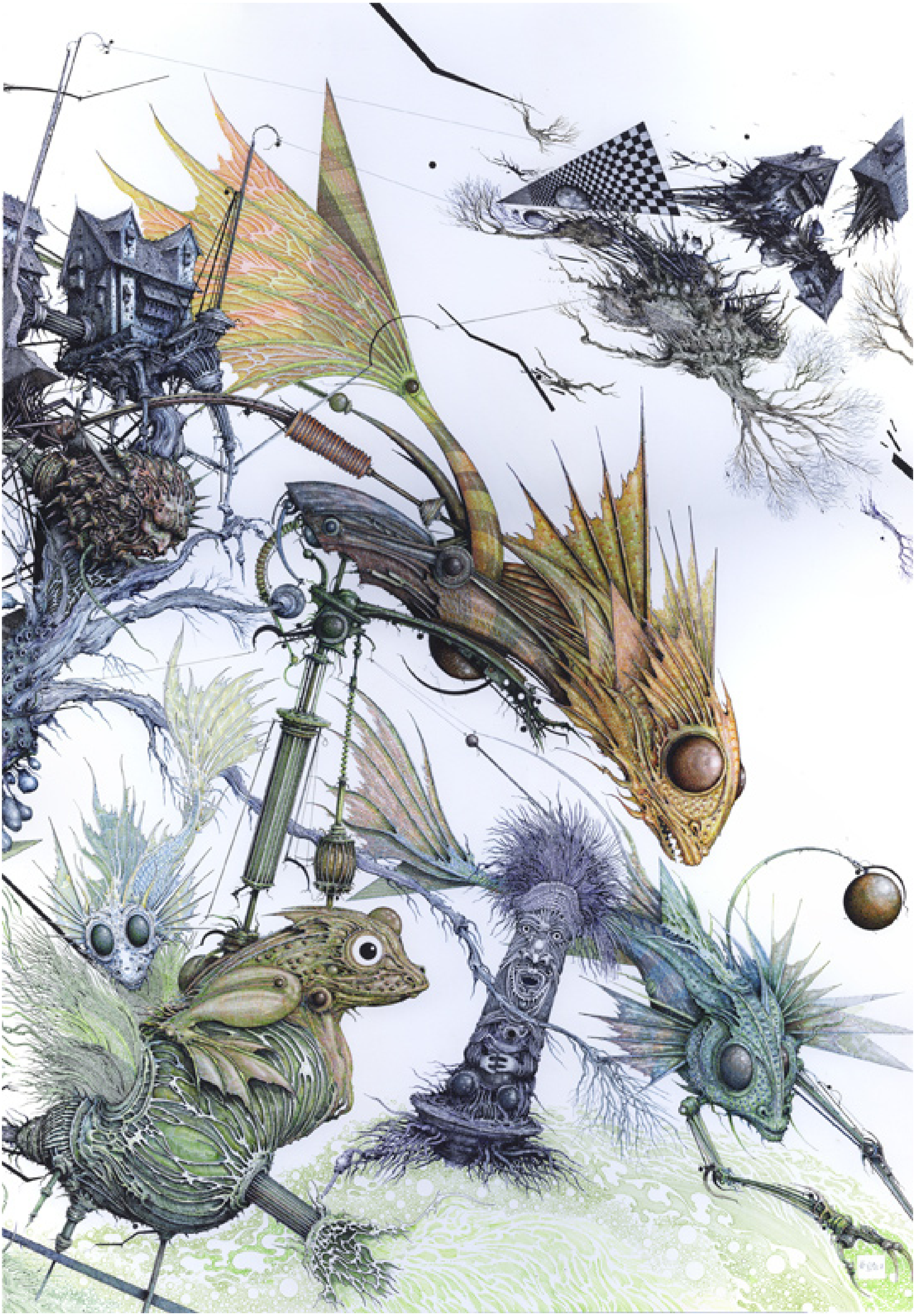
An older boy took us on a tour of Chiswick Park,
Pointing out old paper bags and bits of yellowed newspaper.
He told us,
Purvurts had spunked off in them, behind the bushes.
I believed him.

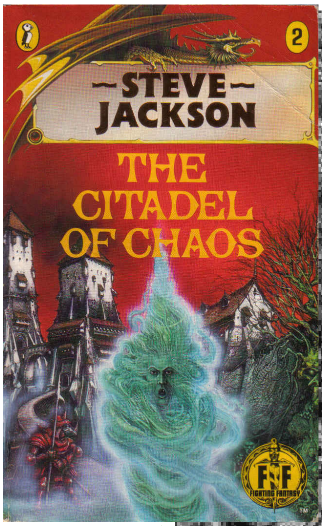
Bastard!

They told me God didn't exist,
But they'd tried that one on, with Father Christmas

Bastards!

Believe it or not, a grass skirted cannibal tapped on my bedroom





window most nights about this time and despite my screams and the subsequent garden searches he was never found. I told my father I'd first seen him, sitting on a chair in the window a furniture store on Chiswick High Road, whilst shopping with my mother. He said he would pop along and have word with the Manager. I don't know what my father said to the Manager, but I never saw the cannibal again.

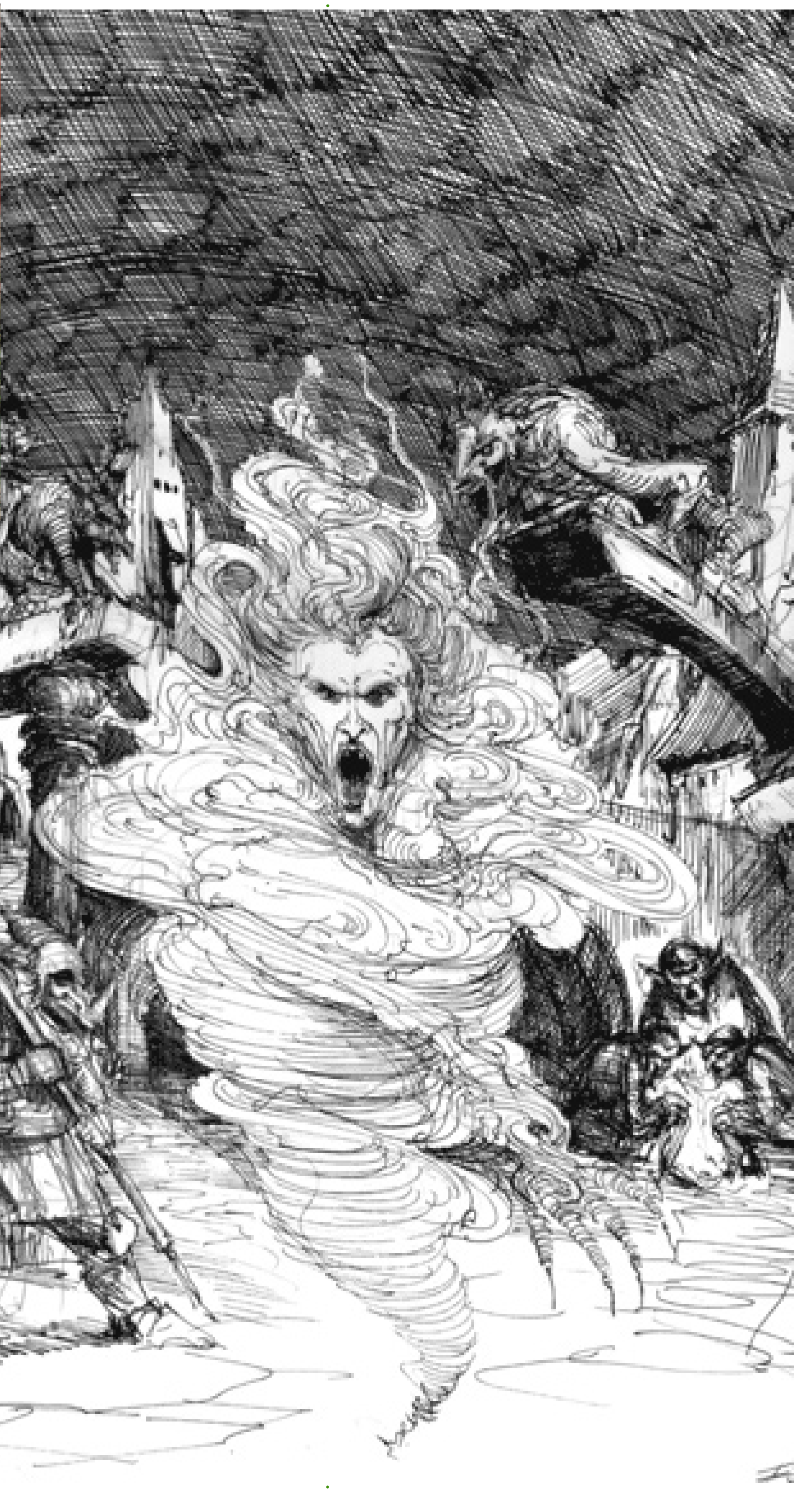
I went to the cinema every Saturday afternoon with my mother, sometimes to see films she had helped dress. Bastions and heaps of every shape and configuration abounded there. Though I knew them all, in most cases to be little more than structures of canvas and wood, paper cut-outs or paintings on glass it mattered not a jot, I willingly filled them out with substance and imaginings all of my own. Cowboys, Knights Indians, soldiers in red coats they were all there, charging about on the silver screen and afterwards around my bedroom walls and across the ceiling, usually in hot pursuit of the fat, green-faced magician from Sinbad the sailor, who frightened me a good deal more than the cannibal. My mind was a whirligig.

At the age of nine I was enrolled at the Mortbane Academy for Boys Invernesshire, a damp, grey granite pile, situated on the shores of a small black-water loch. It was here, whilst under the influence and tutelage of Mr Beck the art master (known affectionately as Old Dribble to those in his charge) that I determined to become an artist. Beck was a spare-framed man with a livid pallor, spiky grey hair and the blushed nose of an inveterate drinker and every boy in the school thought the world of him.

I remember doing this wonderful oil painting of a sunset, a panorama on hardboard in orange, red and black, a subtle palette knife smear, sinking down behind a flat lamp black roof scape. I thought it was very special, so did Mr Beck. He put it up on a easel in front of the assemble art class and explained why. He told us my picture, was without fear of contradiction, the worst painting ever produced in the entire history of art and would not be, in his opinion, bettered by anything in the near, or foreseeable future.

Every one cheered.

He told me, that my ability to create such an unerring visual obscenity was a portentous moment in both our lives, not to mention that of the class. He told me, bearing witness to this event was far, far better than he deserved. In what seemed a brighter vein, he then told me that the gap between failure and success was infinitesimal, so small as to be unmeasurable. "Twitch once, Miller, and you're King of the Heap. Twitch twice and you're inconsolably lost."



Opposite page: *Rift x*. Section from three panel image. Private commission for Paul and LizAnn Lizotte, USA (2008). This page: Draft cover for *The Citadel of Chaos* (1986).

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

FILM / FEATURE ANIMATION / MULTIMEDIA PROJECTS

1975~1976 — *Wizards* (Animated Feature)
Background Design
Director: Ralph Bakshi
20th Century Fox / Los Angeles

1980 — *The Man Who Bought A Dream*
Projection Images
The Electric Light Show Mime Company / London

1983 — *Star Codes Project*
Design and construction of masks for dance sequences
Warner Brothers / Irish TV

1991~1992 — *Cool World* (Animated Feature)
Background Design
Director: Ralph Bakshi
Paramount Pictures / Los Angeles

1994 — *Cristos* (Animated Feature)
Preproduction: Flying Machine Design
Director: Bruce Woodside
Warner Brothers / Los Angeles

1994 — *The Alchemy Project*
Gardner Art Centre / Sussex University
Consructions from Waste Materials two week summer project
Direction

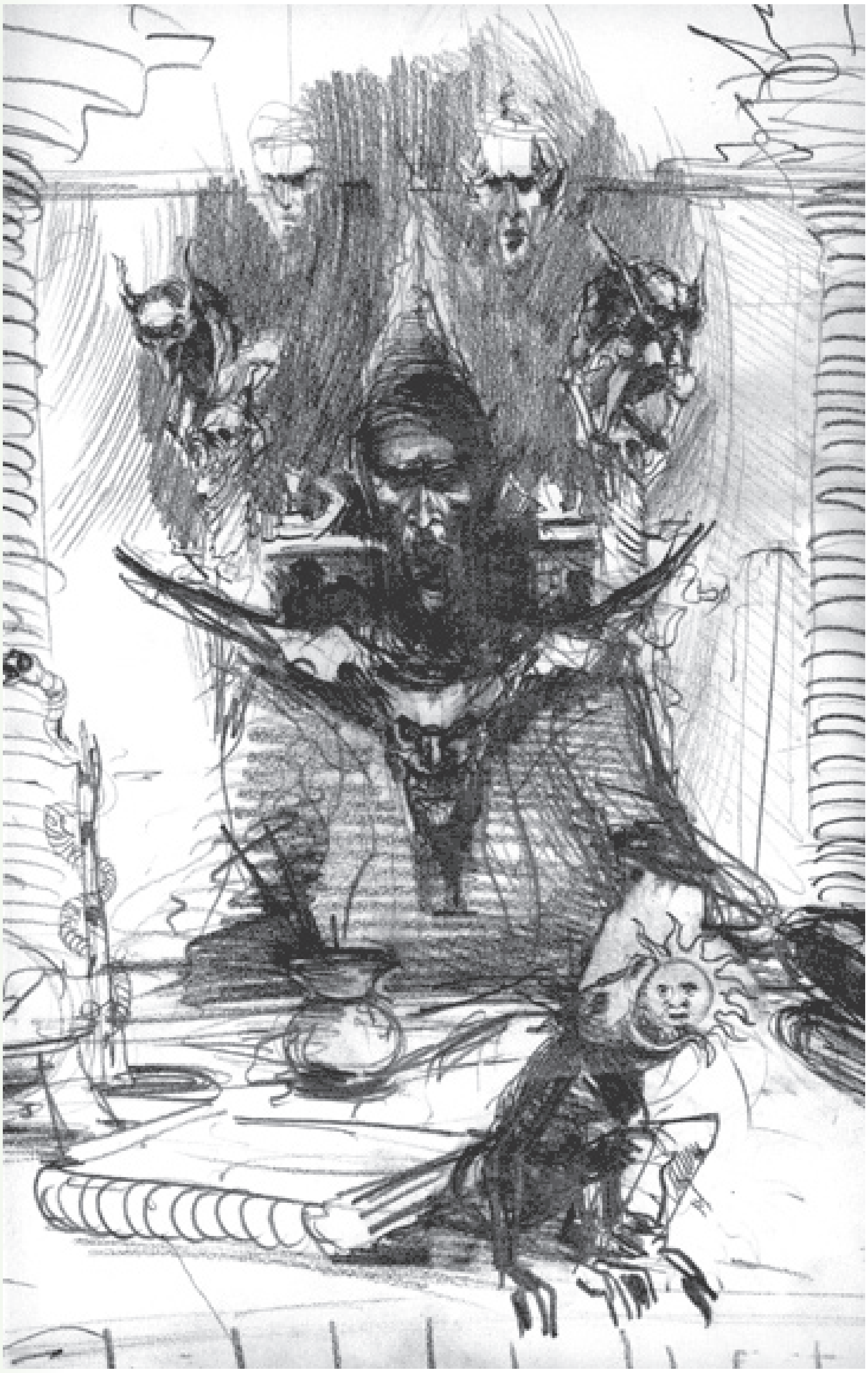
1996 — *Shrek* (Animated Feature)
Preproduction Design: Backgrounds
DreamWorks Animation / Los Angeles

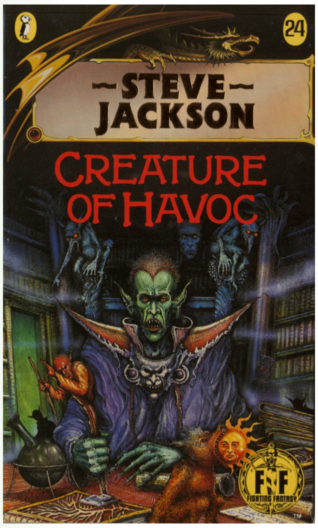
1997 — *Artic* (Animated Feature)
Preproduction Design: Backgrounds
Dream Picture Studio / Santa Monica, California

2003 – *Mirrormask* A film by Dave Mckean
Background imagery
Jim Henson Company Ltd.

2004 – *Ant Bully* (Animated Feature)
Background design
DNA Productions, Irving, Texas / Warner Brother's, Los Angeles

2005 – *The Confessions of Carrie Sphagnum* (in development)
based on original story and imagery by Ian Miller (short animation)
Director: Ian Miller
Animation: Lemonade
Production Revolver of Rotterdam.

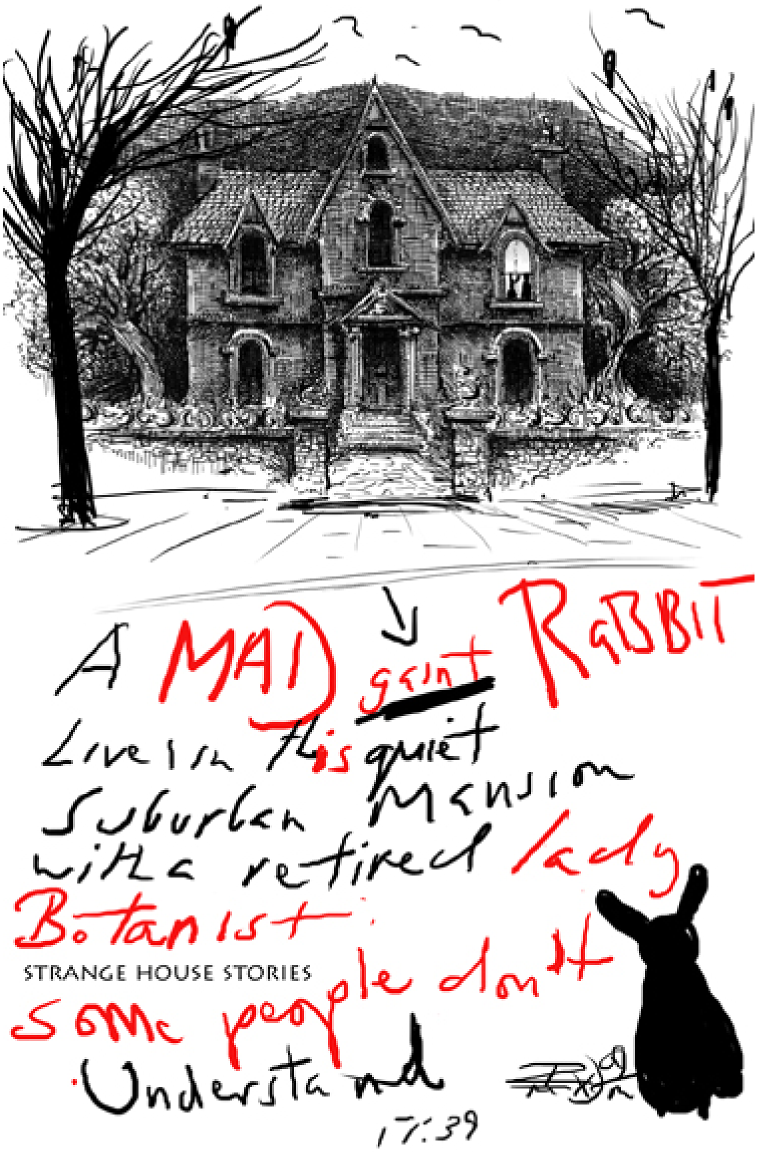




Removing the picture from the easel he smiled at me and said, "Carry on and remember the twitch".

I did and do frequently.

Did you always want to be a professional artist, or did you have other childhood ambitions?
I wanted to be a crow, but somebody said I'd have to die first and, try for that the next time around. I tried running away from the moon about the same time, with some other children who lived close by. It was raining hard, and we ran in ever widening circles without any luck. It was always up above



us, shining down, no matter how fast we ran.

Was being an artist something that your family supported?
Always. When I realised I couldn't be a crow, I wanted to be a soldier, but my mother said it would be very bad for my nerves, and I would be far was better off drawing pictures and being quiet.

METHOD OF EXPRESSION

Who would you cite as influences on your style of art?
Durer, Kippenberger, Ensor, to name three amongst many, There is so much to be influenced by after all. Art, the creativity process, is an eclectic beast, so that is as it should be.

What sort of media do you prefer to work with?
No favourites. I'll use whatever works to do the job (with varied degrees of success of course), but it ain't half fun trying. For me, the creative imperative is to push at the boundaries, and I do this all the time. People are sometimes surprised by the things and mess I create. Some applaud, others lament and say sorry.

Opposite page: Draft cover for *Creature of Havoc* (1986). Above: E-mail visual ditty.

BOOKS - Own Work Published

Complete Volumes

1979 — *Green Dog Trumpet and Other Stories* / Dragons Dream Publishing

1980 — *Secret Art* / Dragons Dream Publishing

1989 — *Ratspike* / Gw Books

Graphic Novels

1991 — *The Luck in the Head*
Co-Author: M John Harrison / Victor Gollancz Publishing

1994 — *The City*
Co-Author: James Herbert / Pan Macmillan Publishing

BOOKS - As Contributor

1979 — *Contemporary Illustrations of Fantasy* / Bantam-Peacock Press

1976 — *Eaters of the Dead*
(fully illustrated & sole contributor) / Author: Michael Crichton / Bantam Books Inc.

1979 — *The Martian Chronicles*
(fully illustrated & sole contributor) / Author: Ray Bradbury / Bantam Books Inc.

1979 — *The Tolkien Bestiary*
(fully illustrated & joint contributor) / Author: David Day / Michael Beazley Publishing

1984 — *The Guide to Fantasy Art Techniques*
(joint contributor) / Paper Tiger Publishing

1988 — *Techniques of Fantasy Art*
(joint contributor) / Macdonald-Orbit

1993 — *Tales of Mystery and Imagination*
(fully illustrated & sole contributor) / Author: Edgar A. Poe / Oxford University Press

1993 — *Treasure Island*
(fully illustrated & sole contributor) / Author: Robert Louis Stevenson / Oxford University Press

1994 — *Ivy*
(fully illustrated & sole contributor) / Author: Anthony Masters / Ginn Publishing

1994 — *Biblioman*
(fully illustrated & sole contributor) / Author: Gene Wolfe / Broken Mirror Press

1995 — *Christmas Carol*
(fully illustrated & sole contributor) / Author: Charles Dickens / Oxford University Press

1996 — *Young Oxford Book Supernatural Stories*
(joint contributor) / Oxford University Press

1997 — *The Oxford Book of Nasty Endings*
(joint contributor) / Oxford University Press

2005 – *The Pit and the Pendulum*
(fully illustrated) / Author: Edgar A. Poe / Oxford
University Press

FIGHTING FANTASY

Cover Illustrations
House of Hell (1984)
The Citadel of Chaos (1986 reprint)
Creature of Havoc (1986)
Phantoms of Fear (1987)
Spectral Stalkers (1991)
Magehunter (1995)

Interior Illustrations
Phantoms of Fear (1987)

CLIENTS LIST

MAGAZINE ILLUSTRATION (COVERS & INTERNAL)

Image Magazine* / *Design Magazine* / *Radio Times
Men Only* / *Penthouse* / *Club International
Vogue* (Germany) / *Shell Times* / *Interzone* / *Kodak
Bike* / *Personnel Mangement* / *Punch
Financial Review* / *White Dwarf* / *Car
Sunday Times* / *Crank* / *Heavy Metal
DC Comics (*Swamp Thing* covers) / *Ciencia*
ydesarrollo* / *Realms of Fantasy* / *Elf Fantasy
***Weird Tales* / Bakshi Productions Inc.**

BOOK ILLUSTRATION (COVERS & INTERNAL)

Littlebrown / Simon & Schuster / Minotaur
Paper Tiger / Barrington Stoke
Oxford University Press / Thames & Hudson
Bantam / Orbit / Macmillan / Victor Gollancz
Puffin / Unwin / Grafton / Hyman / Bloomsbury
Panther / Abacus / GW Books / Routledge
Sphere / Futura / Arrow / Peacock Press
Michael Beazley / Pan / Piper / Ginn
Paladin / Headline / Longman Paperjacks / Penguin /
Scholastic Doubleday / Edgewood Press
Broken Mirror Press

GAMING ILLUSTRATION

Wizards of the Coast
(*Magic Everway*)
Marvel Comics (*Spider-Man*)
FASA (*Blood Wood*)
Daedalus (*Feng Shui*)
Games Workshop (*Realms of Chaos*)
Hidden City Games

I start by pencilling in the image. When I've got the disposition I want and this is sometimes hard won with a lot of rubbing out and reworking I go to stage two. Depending on my mood this stage can vary. Sometimes I block in the pencil shapes using water colour or acrylic ink washes or if taken, ink in all the basic pencil shapes and then block in with coloured washes afterwards. If after this everything still looks sound I begin the slow trawl of laying down the primary and secondary detail.

At this stage I cover the image with movable sheets of paper leaving only that area of the image I am working on exposed. This window can be no more than two inches square at times and allows me to focus totally on the area I'm working on free from the inevitable distractions of the bigger field because most of the vital decisions about the image were made in the primary stages. This seldom creates problems. On a purely practical basis it also protects the image from getting greased up as your hand moves back and forward over the surface of the picture. I remove these cover sheets on a regular basis to check on the overall feel of the image. Despite this rather pragmatic approach this process is never a forgone conclusion. At any stage of the work changes can be made, and often are. Areas which have been days in the doing might be reshaped or even scratched out completely. Again, mood dictates how the detail is applied. I will sometimes work through the whole image applying primary and specific types of textures and detail. On other occasions I will build up and concentrate on a single section of the picture creating a salient anchor point in the still transient field of coloured wash and pencil lines.

At days end however, which ever route you take, there must be an overall tension and unity in the finished picture, no matter how contentious, disaffected or anarchic the varied elements in that piece of work might be. Everything is driven by mood. No matter how many times you use a particular technique or style of image making there should always be room to push back the boundaries and through experiment expand your awareness. In contrast my loose methods of working is all run at the wall style and it does not always matter how well you see as much as how fast you flick your wrist.

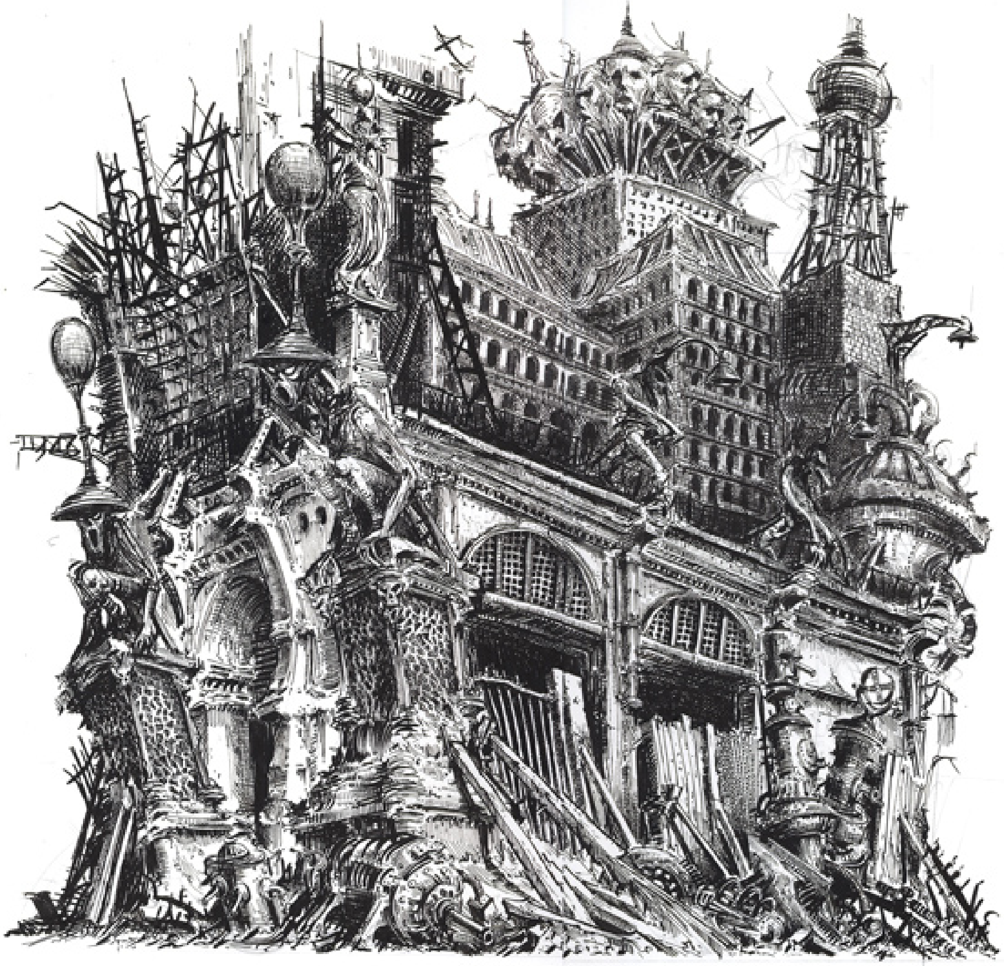
interest / tattoo / cross platform

I recently designed a tattoo for a man in the States, based on an illustration I had done back in the seventies of Tolkien's Balrog from *The Lord of the Rings* in a book called the *Tolkien Bestiary*. Because of the detail only a Tattooist in New York could handle the work which means he does a lot of travelling from out of state and suffers for every line.

Given the obvious restraints and retentive nature of the tight pen style applying the term visual constipation to it on occasion helps, if a little crudely, to emphasis and underscore the inherent nature of the process.

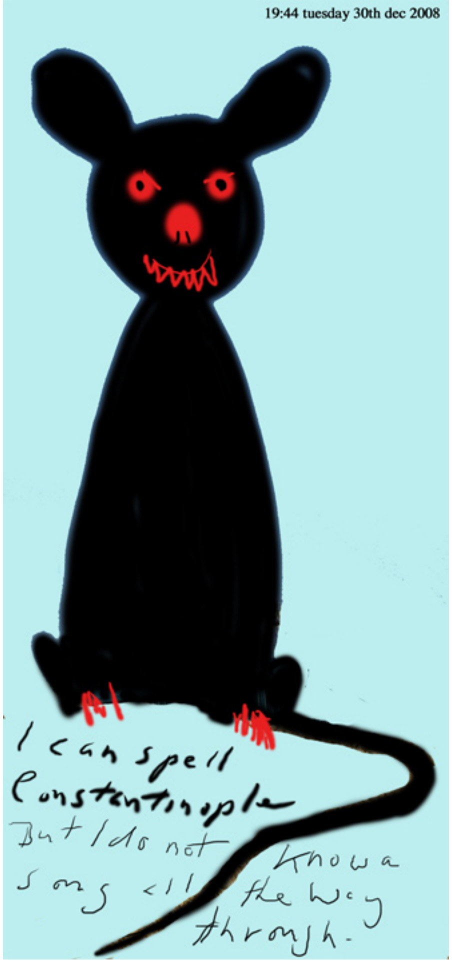
Though diametrically opposed in their methods of application both styles compliment and benefit from the existence of the other. By working loose, I acquire a better understanding of tight and visa versa. This awareness in turn promotes a

Opposite page (top): Prep study for alley scene in the animated feature *Cool World*. Director: Ralph Bakshi (1980's).
Opposite page (bottom): Black mouse. E-mail visual ditty.



far more critical and enlightened understanding of the tensions at play in a visual composition. That both spring from a common root and are driven by the need to make images further validates them.

Some people embrace both forms, other acknowledge only the tight work as valid. The duality is implicit in both forms. Between these two extremes is the work I do on the computer. Again this is a real problem area for some people. Everybody's had the computer versus serious proper traditional art debate so I won't waste space, other than to say like many others before me that it's a brilliant creative tool that cannot be denied. I love my Mac and Photoshop and still want to do all the other things with charcoal and paint. The eclectic process underwrites it all. My experimental work is an open ended process. In a recent exhibition I constructed an image six feet by four on a field made from glued paper and barbed wire. I was very pleased with the result and now have to navigate around it in front hall. I might add that it is encased in a large free standing box so the danger of torn skin is not a problem.



Sometimes I describe my imagery as stills from a lost film; mute, frozen, fragments, waiting for a lead. I love the idea of fragmentation in all its diversities and more, the fanciful notion of a metaphysical glue pot somewhere with which to reunite the lost pieces in a new or totally anarchic order. It has been suggested by some, that fragmentation is synonymous with modern living, so maybe I'm just a drone of my time.

When I'm asked what my images are all about, what motivated them and what am I trying to say I invariably think of the Joharis Window concept when formulating a reply. The Joharis Window is a window on the world divided up into four parts:

1. The part which is known to yourself and others.
2. The part that is perceived by others but hidden from yourself.
3. The part that is hidden from others but known to yourself.
4. The part that is hidden from yourself and from others.

People always ask me what lies at the root of my image making?

Why do I do it this way?
Do I set out to upset?
Why do I keep going on about doing a children's book blah blah?
What do you mean by duality in your work?
Have you tried the Hospital?

"Okay," I say, "I never wanted to leave Wonderland, but that bitch Alice wouldn't let me stay."

Providing the insights people crave is not easy.

statement

I am a great advocate of the eclectic process and the use of mixed media in image making. No artist should be unwillingly constrained by the appellation of painter, sculpture illustrator, designer etc. The constant search for new horizons, new and innovative vehicles and tools of expression, is implicit in the creative process and should never be impeded.

I am intrigued and fascinated by

the speed values inherent in a visual composition, by its flow and direction. By speed value, I mean the speed at which the eye engages, reacts, and travels across, around, or through the picture, with the retention or mobility values peculiar to different colours, between a ragged line and a smooth one, a thick and a fat, a regular or amorphous shape, a smooth or textured one. Understanding and being able to manipulate these qualities, during the picture making process, or when constructing a three dimensional form, can mark the difference between creating something great and something very ordinary.

MAN OF ART

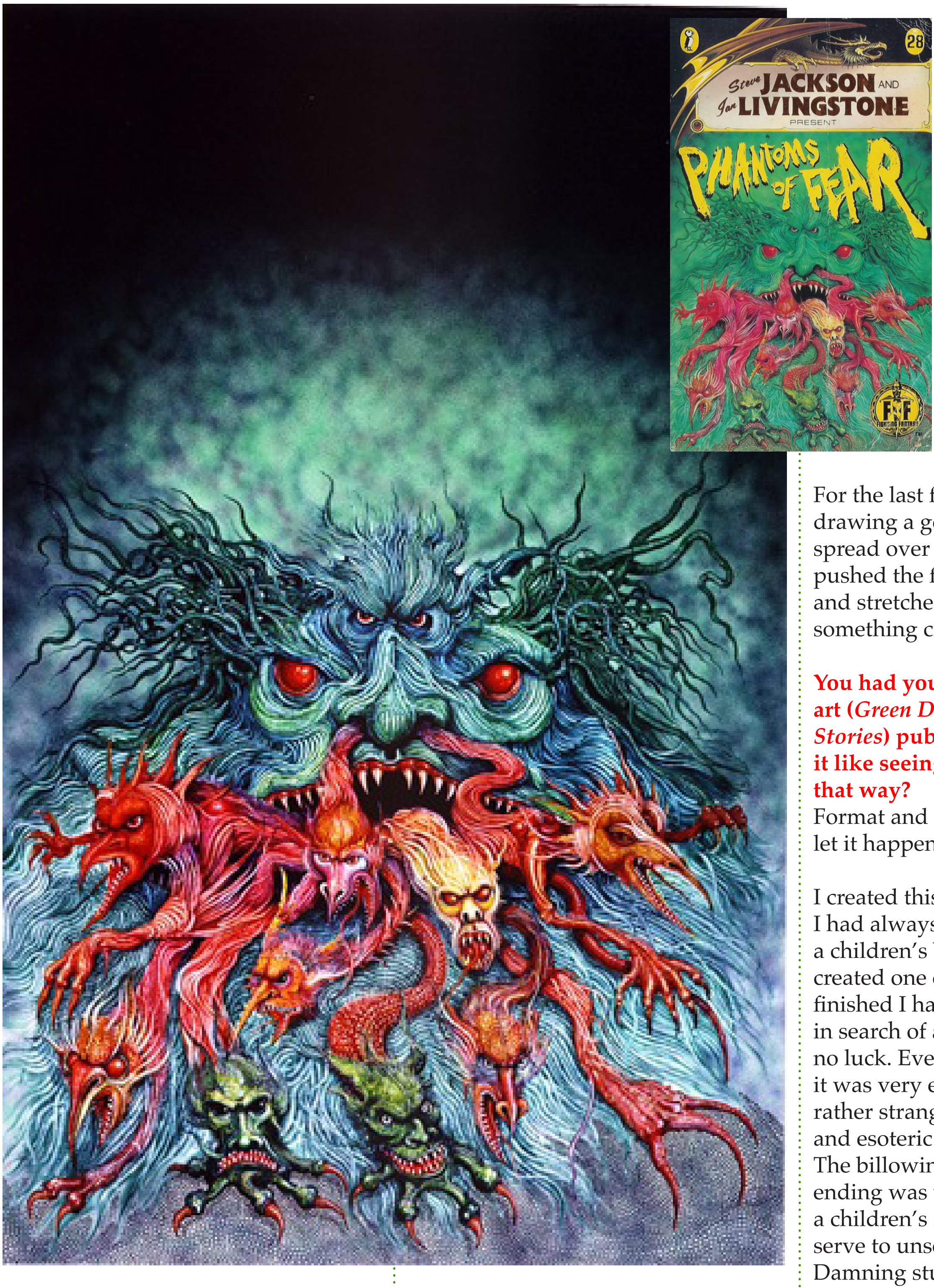
How did you get your first paying gig as an artist?
With an art magazine called *Image*. In 1970 I'd just left St Martin's with a degree in Painting. The artwork was a four/five panelled comic format called *Quest of the Peqoud*.

What has been the most challenging commission of your career so far?
In truth I find all commissions challenging. I get to choose what I do now for the most part these days, but I always try and push and extend the boundaries of the image making process. For the last few years I've have been drawing a goodly number of images spread over several panels. This has pushed the fine line style to the limits and stretched my arms and back something cruel.

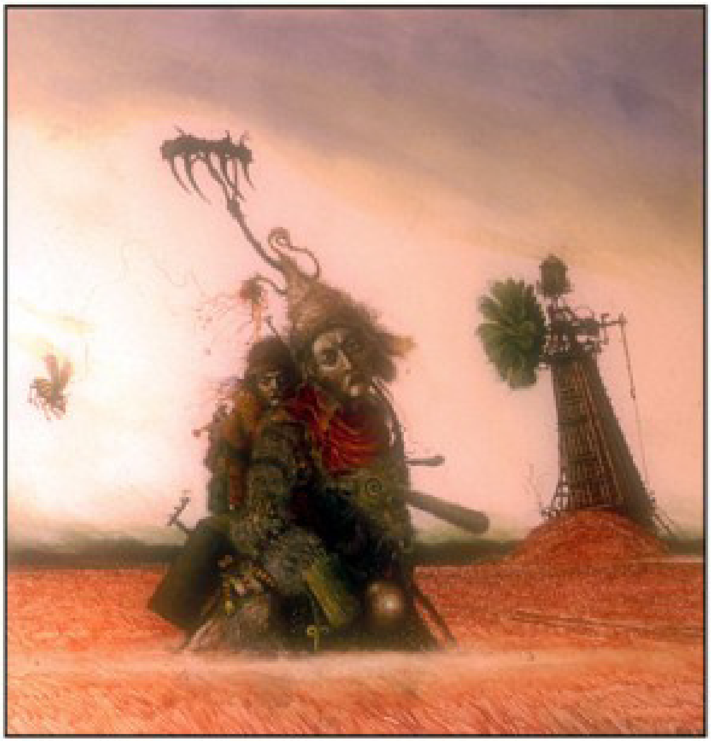
You had your first collected book of art (*Green Dog Trumpet and Other Stories*) published in 1979. What was it like seeing your work presented that way?
Format and print wise dreadful, but I let it happen, so I've nobody to blame.

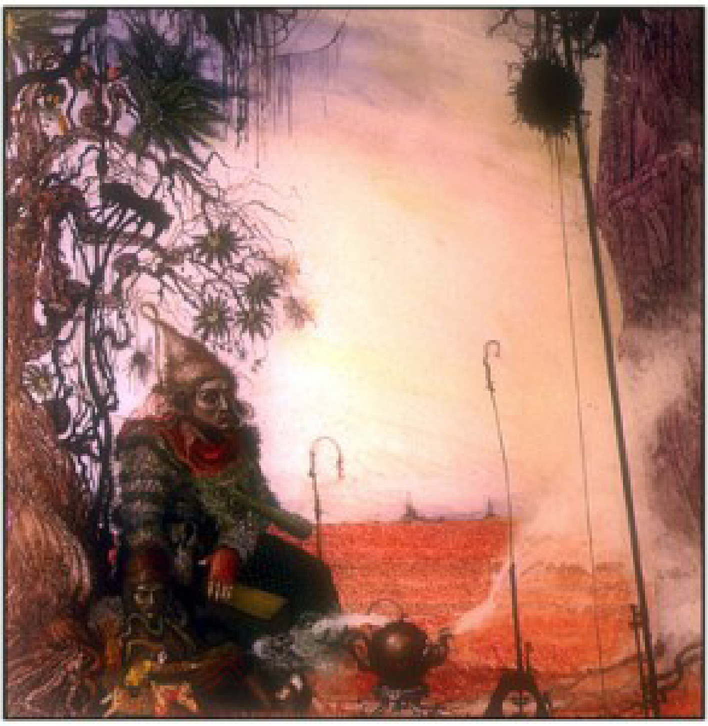
I created this set of images in 1974. I had always wanted to illustrate a children's book, so I decided to created one of my own. When it was finished I hawked it around London in search of a publisher, but sadly had no luck. Everybody I saw thought it was very exciting but that it was rather strange and far to complicated and esoteric for the children's market. The billowing clouds and nebulous ending was wholly unsuitable for a children's story and would only serve to unsettle and confuse them. Damning stuff.

Given it was Galt toy time with lots of amorphous polished wooden shapes masquerading as rabbits, ducks, dogs and even trains I thought the uncertainty ticket was not a problem. But I was wrong. Years on I idly wondered whether fixing chunky red wheels and a pull string to each illustration might have tipped the balance in my favour?



This page: Final cover art for *Phantoms of Fear* (1987).
Opposite page (top): Pages 1 & 2 of *Green Dog Trumpet* (1979).
Opposite page (bottom): Two pieces from *Quest of the Peqoud* (1970).





Because I remembered as a five year old being totally enthralled by Grimm's fairy tales, *Struwwelpeter*, a sepia engraving of the Denunciation of Christ, which hung on the wall above my bed, and the jam of engravings in the bound additions of *Punch Magazine* owned by my father, the 'strange' complicated image number was absolute rubbish, as was the nebulous ending criticism.

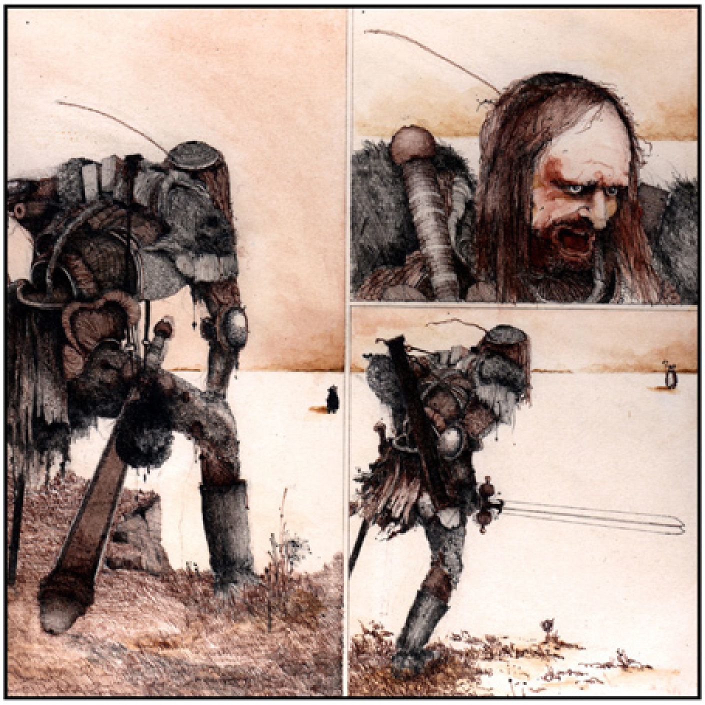
In any event I didn't change a thing and the disappointment was short lived. I had lots of other things to do and in 1975 went out to Los Angeles to work on a Ralph Bakshi film called *Wizards*.

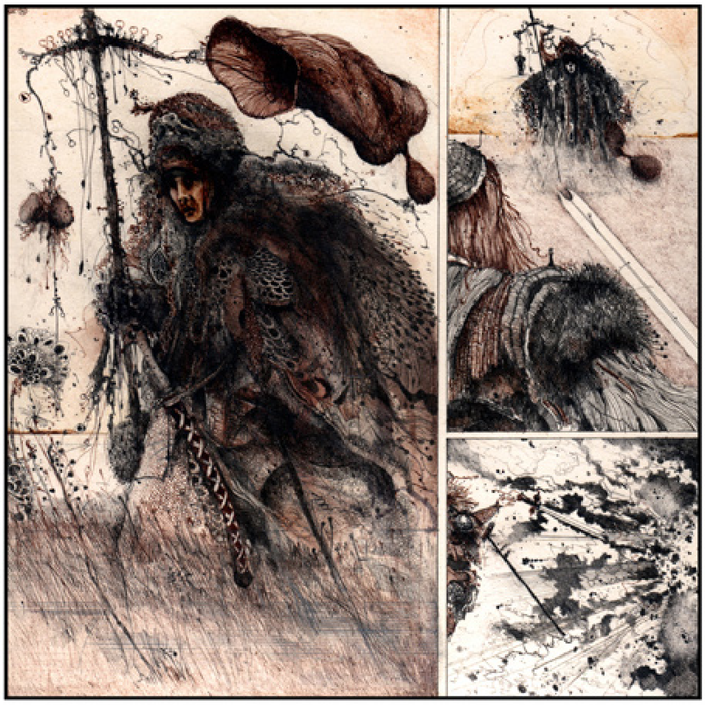
In 1979 *The Green Dog Trumpet* in company with several other stories was published by Dragons Dream, followed shortly afterwards by a second volume of my work entitled the *Secret Art*.

Looking back now at *Green Dog Trumpet*, how would you evaluate it?
In some ways: an epic disaster. It took me a long time to get over it, but at days end I let it happen and had to get on past it and try even harder. I still am.

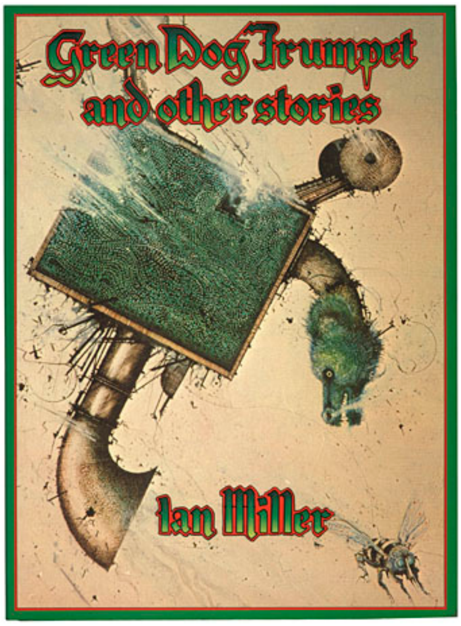
> *"Try again. Fail again. Fail better."*
> *– Samuel Beckett*

Do you think that if you were a green, young artist now, touting the exact same book to publishers, that you would receive a different response and perhaps even publication?
I don't think I'd have a cat in hells chance of selling it, but then, what do I know.





You've worked on animated films, such as *Cool World*. What was your primary involvement in such a project and can you give us some background as to how you came to be involved in the film industry and what it was like working on such films?
I was literally stranded and penniless in San Francisco. It was early on in the seventies, and my wife and I were living in an old hotel called the Gaylord near Union square, when Ralph Bakshi traced me via London and Bantam Books in New York, on the strength of a *Gormenghast* image I had created for Pan Books a year before.



I was flown to LA and offered a job on the spot, working on the film *War Wizards*, released as *Wizards*. I created backgrounds for the film and even recorded the voices for small part elves. I was supposed to work on *Lord of the Rings* after this, but I decided to return home to the UK. When *Cool World* came along Ralph asked me to work on it, which I did for a while, creating backgrounds. Over the years I've worked on visual development for a number of films, *Ant Bully* by DNA being one of them, and several others that never saw the light of day. It is very exciting being in a studio environment. You meet an astonishing array of very talented people, which in a team context is sometimes surprising. The pressure to produce is the only downside I think. Ralph Bakshi, allowed me a lot of creative freedom, which is perhaps rare these days. But then what do I know.

You've had the opportunity to illustrate a number of classic books. Do you feel the expectations place on the art (through reader familiarity) are different to those of a brand new title as yet untested by the public?
One is always subject to the vagaries of the commissioning editor and publishing house, whatever the title or status of the work (and of course the buyer/viewer at process end) and on rare occasions one can find one's self little short of hamstrung by the expectations and dictates of the commissioning body. Most practising artists/illustrators have experienced this at one time or another.

That said however I have always enjoyed a reasonable degree of freedom in my work, even more so now than before, and if I feel that my licence to interpret is overly restricted or will result in a substandard image, can be done much better by another artist, I decline the work. In truth I've never worked well, straight jacketed, and sadly there are a goodly number of images still floating around to confirm this.

You've had some of your artwork exhibited. How often does this happen and what sort of pieces do you usually like to put forward for such events?
I have not had a proper show for rather a long time, and maybe it is time that I did. Over the years I've exhibited in a lot of places in mixed and one man exhibitions. I try if I can, to field a mix of imagery in various styles, even free standing constructions/sculptures on occasion.

I started at St Martin's in the sculpture department (in the late 60's) then switched to painting in my second year. Even so, I never lost interest in creating forms in 3D.

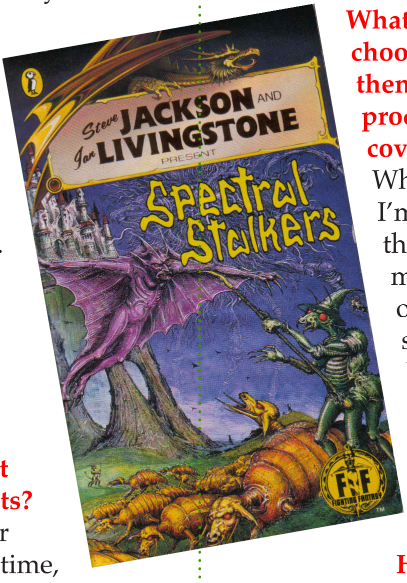
I think my next show, if I ever get around to it, will be predominately black and white with a section of free standing objects.

What sort of things do you like to draw/doodle in your free moments?
Badly drawn vicious rabbits, and men with wooden arms. I'd say "red towers and fog bells", but you might think that a wee bit strange.

COVERS OF FANTASY

Your first work for the *Fighting Fantasy* range was the cover of *House of Hell* in 1984. How did you get the gig?
I got the job through the art agency Young Artists, which is now known as Arena.

Do you recall what feedback you got for the cover, if any?
I did a series of roughs, four I think, and Steve chose the version he liked best. It was an easy process.

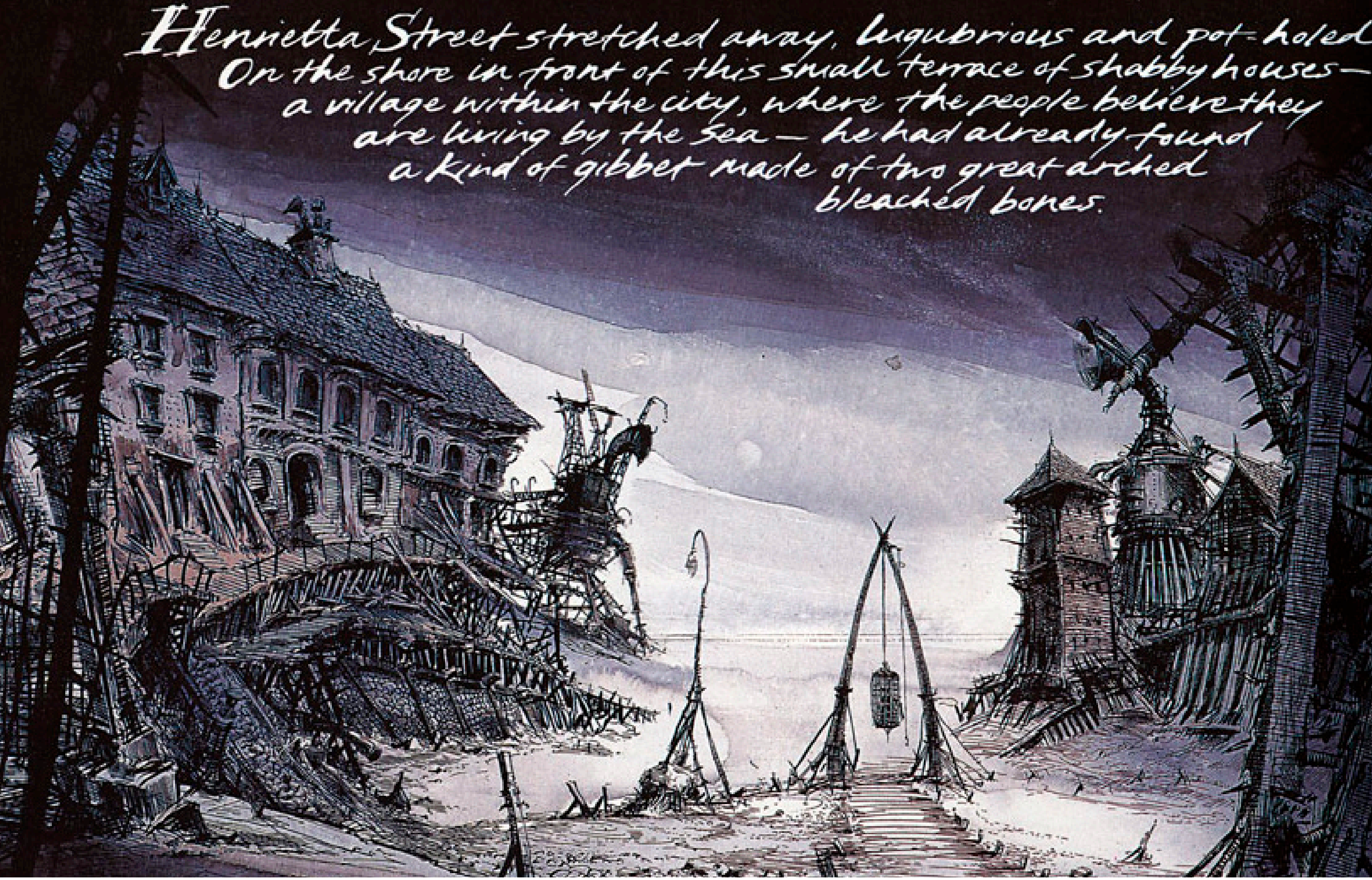


What size canvas did you choose to work with back then and what was the process of creating a cover like that?
When I did cover work, I'm not often asked these days, I worked maybe one or two up on the published book size. The image would be pencilled in, then inked and coloured. I used Illustration board for the most part.

Had you read the book for inspiration or did you follow a brief and your own ideas?
I always read the books I did covers for. It made sense to do so in my opinion.

I understand that Steve Jackson kept the finished cover art for *House of Hell* for himself. Does that (writers keeping the over art as a memento) happen often in your experience?
Yes, Steve bought two of the *Fighting Fantasy* covers, and yes, several

This page: Cover of *Green Dog Trumpet and Other Stories* (1979).
Opposite page (top): Excerpt from *The Luck in the Head* (1991).
Opposite page (bottom): Cover of *At the Mountains of Madness* (1974).


Henrietta Street stretched away, lugubrious and pot-holed.
On the shore in front of this small terrace of shabby houses –
a village within the city, where the people believe they
are living by the sea – he had already found
a kind of gibbet made of two great arched
bleached bones.

writers have bought covers over the years. A goodly number of others have wanted the artwork, but not had the money to make a purchase.

Your next cover was for a reprint of *The Citadel of Chaos*. Do you look at what has been done before when doing a new cover for an older book?
No. I read the book and react anew.

Your third *Fighting Fantasy* cover was for *Creature of Havoc*. Steve Jackson was apparently so impressed by your cover he rewrote some of the character descriptions to make your illustration match the main villain? What are your feelings on such a reaction to your output?
In truth I did not know this, but it's nice to think the image resonated so. Maybe that comes of reading the book and meeting the author.

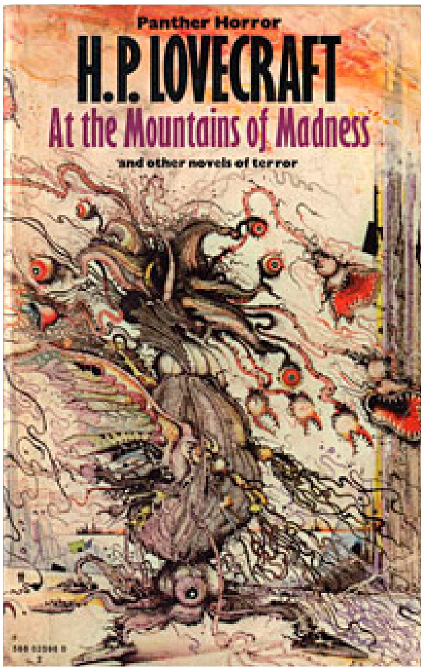
You ended up doing both the cover and the internal art for *Phantoms of Fear*. Was that because you had asked for such an opportunity?
I was asked, it seemed like a good idea, and I was left to get on with it.

The final cover art for *Phantoms of Fear* is much brighter (especially the greens and reds) and cropped, compared to your finished version. How do you feel about publishers fiddling with your artwork in such a manner?
I don't much like it, and over the years I've seen some good art, not always my own, butchered by people, who would be bettered suited sticking jellies on cakes in a biscuit factory. There are of course some astonishingly clever designers and Art directors around, who take something mundane and make it absolutely sing. It's the nature of the beast.

There were quite a sizable gaps between *Phantoms of Fear* (1987), *Spectral Stalkers* (1991) and *Magehunter* (1995). Were you surprised to be asked back for a further cover after such an absence?
Not really. I've always been busy with something or other, so don't have much time to wonder about such things. There's a season for all things they say and I merely assumed everything had moved on, other styles, other artists.

Of your six covers for *Fighting Fantasy*, the cover of *Phantoms of Fear* strikes many as the most bizarre. Do you agree with such an assessment?
Not sure I do. The rough was well received so off we went.

Many artists have mentioned the short deadlines for *Fighting Fantasy*. Was this something you found challenging?
Maybe things were a little more humane back then, less churl, whip, and medieval. I do not remember being hassled over time or feeling pressured.


Panther Horror
H.P. LOVECRAFT
At the Mountains of Madness
and other novels of terror

What out of your *Fighting Fantasy* output are you the happiest with today?

I think the first, *House of Hell* was the best of the bunch.

If offered the opportunity to work on a new *Fighting Fantasy* title would you be interested?

I'm always interested, if the fee is sensible.

END OF TALES

How would you describe the life of a freelance illustrator?

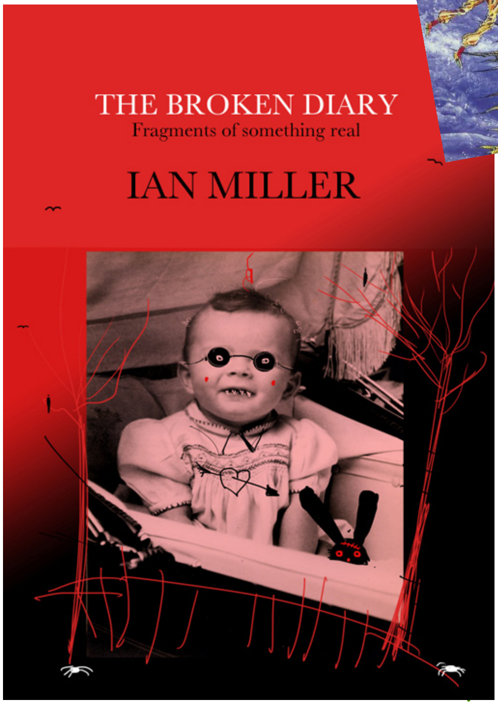
Famous message from the French General Foch to General Joffre, 1914:

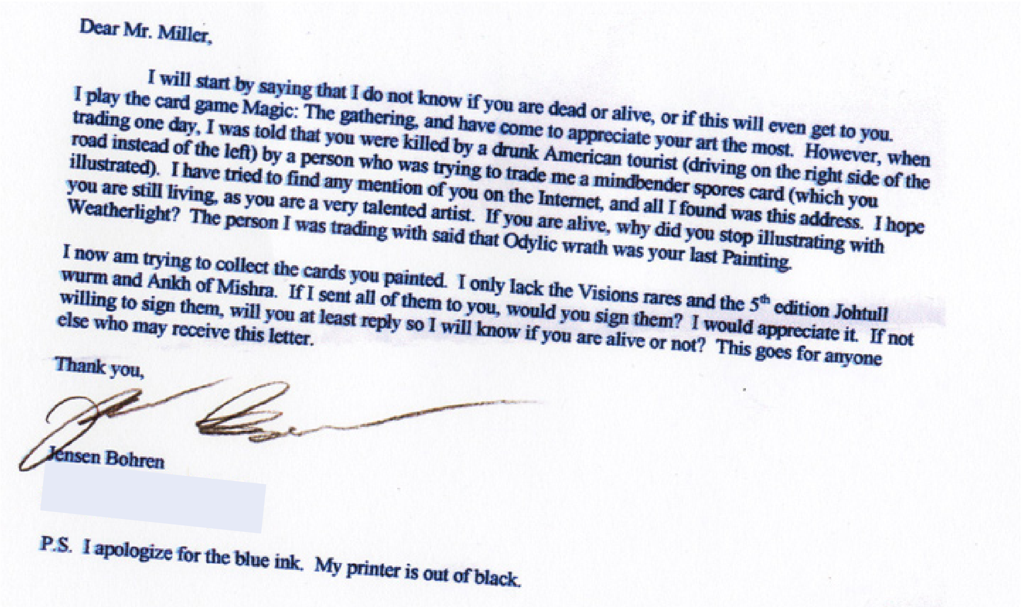
> *"Hard pressed on my right. My centre is yielding. Impossible to manoeuvre. Situation excellent. I am attacking."*

I couldn't sum up the creative process better. Sublime optimism in the face of adversity, coupled with a doggedness, verging on the insane.

What sort of advice would you give someone wanting to become a freelance illustrator?

> *I find the harder I work, the more luck I seem to have.*
> — *Thomas Jefferson*
>
> *The artist is nothing without the gift, but the gift is nothing without work.*
> — *Emile Zola*





Dear Mr. Miller,

I will start by saying that I do not know if you are dead or alive, or if this will even get to you.
I play the card game Magic: The gathering, and have come to appreciate your art the most. However, when
trading one day, I was told that you were killed by a drunk American tourist (driving on the right side of the
road instead of the left) by a person who was trying to trade me a mindbender spores card (which you
illustrated). I have tried to find any mention of you on the Internet, and all I found was this address. I hope
you are still living, as you are a very talented artist. If you are alive, why did you stop illustrating with
Weatherlight? The person I was trading with said that Odylic wrath was your last Painting.

I now am trying to collect the cards you painted. I only lack the Visions rares and the 5th edition Johtull
wurm and Ankh of Mishra. If I sent all of them to you, would you sign them? I would appreciate it. If not
willing to sign them, will you at least reply so I will know if you are alive or not? This goes for anyone
else who may receive this letter.

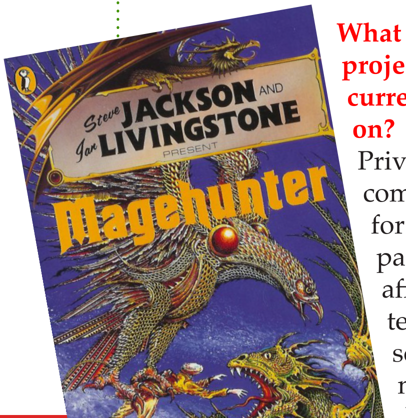
Thank you,

Jensen Bohren

[redacted]

P.S. I apologize for the blue ink. My printer is out of black.

It can be magic. When it goes wrong, and it will, somewhere sometime, fall over, bite the floor, scream, cry, then get up and go again. Even the very best struggle sometime. Do not accept second best, be your own person, and be kind to your fellow artists. The pursuit of excellence is all that matters.



What sort of projects are you currently at work on?

Private commissions for the most part. Free fall affairs that tease the brain somewhat, and my book *The Broken Diary*, or Novel, if I dare call it that. Also the first tentative scribbles for a graphic novel based on a theatre project I wrote some years ago called *The Shingle Dance*. Fishing for eel fingers, and painting fog bells.

Have you ever received fan mail for your work? If so, can you share what some of it has been like?

Bags full. *(see top of the page for an example)*

A conversation with a facsimile

2008 / A question from California

The computer is a tool, like a pen, faster and more sophisticated, but still a tool. I have a wide remit as far as image making goes. The digital images are a product of that creative process. They are not a transition. Same core process, different tool.

Conversation with a facsimile from California continued / August 08 15:06

Pink in California maybe, but not the pink they wear here. The Pink they wear here in the UK, creeps out of the weave, smells of damp, and travels through the ethers.

regards
Ted Tap

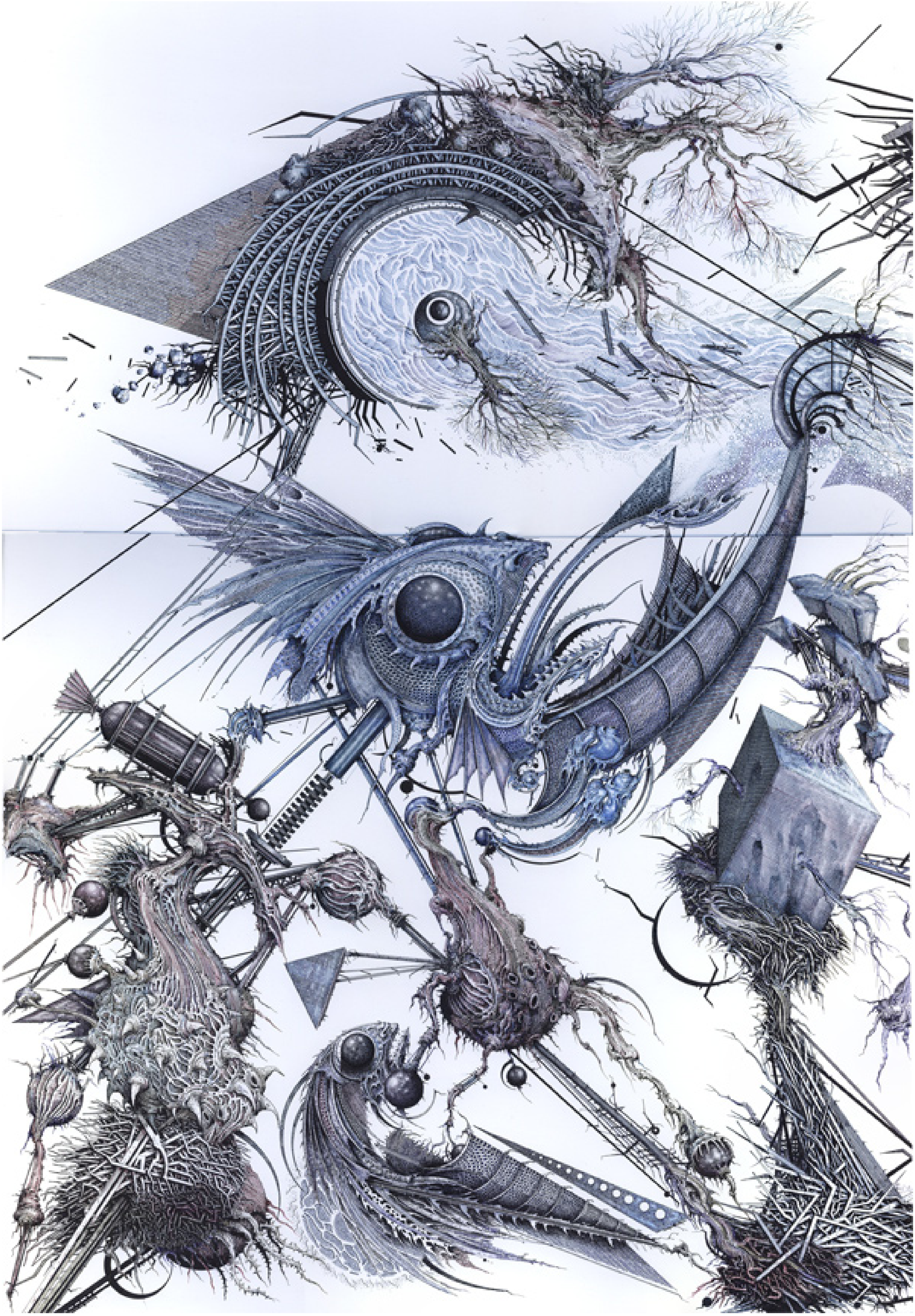
Outside of art, what are your hobbies and interests?

Most everything is interesting. I use to do Kendo badly, dinghy sail with astonishing ineptitude, and run backwards a lot. I mostly walk now with my dog, as far away from engine noise and concrete as I can get. I love swimming, but developed a leak which makes river crossing rather hazardous.

Fighting Fantazine *extends its thanks to Ian Miller for agreeing to the interview. Take some time to visit Ian's website at www.ian-miller.org to see more of his unique and creative art.*

FF

This page: Possible cover for the book currently in hand.
Opposite page: Another section from *Rift x*.



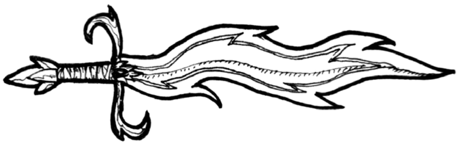
RETURN TO THE ICEFINGER MOUNTAINS

by Ed Jolley

Illustrated by Brett Schofield

INSTRUCTIONS

To play this adventure you will need two dice, a pencil and an eraser. There is an *Adventure Sheet* on page 25, on which to record your scores. You are advised either to record your scores on the *Adventure Sheet* in pencil or to make photocopies of the sheet for use in future adventures.



Skill, Stamina, and Luck

Before embarking upon your quest, you need to know more about yourself. First you should determine your *Initial* SKILL, STAMINA and LUCK scores.

SKILL reflects your agility and general fighting expertise. Roll one die. Add 6 to this number and enter the total in the SKILL box on your *Adventure Sheet*.

STAMINA denotes your general health and fitness. Your determination and your will to survive are all reflected in this score. Roll two dice. Add 12 to the total rolled and enter this total in the STAMINA box.

LUCK indicates how naturally lucky you are. Roll one die and add 6 to this number. Record your total LUCK score in the appropriate box on the *Adventure Sheet*.

Your SKILL, STAMINA and LUCK scores will be constantly changing during your adventure. You should keep an accurate record of these scores. However, you should never erase your *Initial* scores. As the adventure progresses, you may be awarded additional SKILL, STAMINA or LUCK points, but these may never exceed your *Initial* scores.

Fighting Battles

You will often find yourself reading paragraphs which instruct you to fight a creature of some sort. You should resolve the battle in the following way.

First record your opponent's SKILL and STAMINA scores on a spare sheet of paper. The scores for each creature are given at the time of the actual encounter. The sequence of combat is then:

1. Roll two dice for the creature. Add its SKILL score. The total is the creature's Attack Strength.
2. Roll two dice for yourself and add your current SKILL score. This total is your Attack Strength.
3. If your Attack Strength is greater than that of your opponent, you have wounded it; go straight to Step 4. If the creature's Attack Strength is greater than yours, it has wounded you; go straight to Step 5. If both scores are the same, you have managed to avoid each other's blows – start the next Attack Round by going to Step 1.
4. You have wounded your opponent. Subtract 2 points from its STAMINA score. If you wish, you may use your LUCK here to do additional damage as described below. Go to Step 6.
5. Your opponent has wounded you. Subtract 2 points from your own STAMINA score. You may use LUCK at this point to minimize the damage.
6. Make the appropriate adjustments to either your opponent's or your own STAMINA score (and to your LUCK too, if you used it).
7. Begin the next Attack Round by going to Step 1.
8. This sequence continues until the STAMINA score of either you or your opponent has been reduced to zero, which means death.

Fighting More Than One Opponent

In certain situations you may face more than one opponent. Sometimes you will treat all opponents as a single monster; at other times you may have to fight each one in turn; and at other times you may have to fight them all at the same time! If they are treated as a single opponent the combat is resolved normally. When you are instructed to fight your opponents one at a time, the combat is again resolved normally – except that once you defeat an enemy, the next one steps forward to fight you!

When you find yourself under attack from more than one opponent at the same time, each adversary will make a separate attack on you during each Attack Round. You must decide which one you are attacking. Attack your chosen target as in a normal battle. Against any additional opponents you roll the dice for your Attack Strength in the usual way; if your Attack Strength is equal to or greater than your

Thirty years ago the Snow Witch was preparing to unleash an ice age upon Titan when her plans were thwarted by a wandering adventurer. YOU were one of the slaves freed in the wake of her defeat, and have lived a quiet life since then. But when the horrors of your past start to catch up with you again, you must go back to the caves from which you escaped. Can the Snow Witch really be returning? And if so, do you have what it takes to stop her?

opponent's you will not inflict any damage; you have simply managed to avoid that enemy's attack. If your Attack Strength is lower than your opponent's, however, you will be wounded in the normal way.

Luck and Its Uses

At various times during your adventure, either in battles or when you find yourself in a situation in which you could be Lucky or Unlucky (you will be told when these apply), you may call on your LUCK for help to make the outcome more favourable. But beware! Using LUCK is a risky business and, if you are Unlucky, the results could be disastrous.

Testing Your Luck

Roll two dice. If the total is less than or equal to your current LUCK score, you have been Lucky and the result will go in your favour. If the number rolled is higher than your current LUCK score, you have been Unlucky, and you will be penalized.

Each time you *Test your Luck* you must deduct 1 point from your current LUCK score. Thus you will soon come to realize that, the more you rely on your LUCK, the more risky the procedure will become.

Using Luck in Battles

In combat you always have the option of using your LUCK either to inflict a more serious wound upon an opponent you have just hit, or to minimize the effects of a wound the creature has inflicted on you.

If you have just wounded the creature, you may *Test your Luck* as described above. If you are Lucky, you will have inflicted a severe wound and may deduct an extra 2 points from the creature's STAMINA score. However, if you are Unlucky, the wound was a mere graze and you do only 1 point of damage to the creature instead of the usual 2 points.

If the creature has just wounded you, you may *Test your Luck* to try to minimize the wound. If you are Lucky, you have managed to avoid

RETURN TO THE ICEFINGER MOUNTAINS
ADVENTURE SHEET

SKILL
INITIAL SKILL =

STAMINA
INITIAL STAMINA =

LUCK
INITIAL LUCK =

PROVISIONS

NOTES

EQUIPMENT

taking the full brunt of the blow. Instead of having to deduct 2 points of damage from your STAMINA, you may deduct only 1 point. If you are Unlucky, though, you have been hit by a more serious blow. Subtract 1 extra point from your STAMINA.

Remember: you must subtract 1 point from your own LUCK score every time you *Test your Luck*, no matter what the outcome.

Restoring Skill, Stamina, and Luck

Skill

Your SKILL will not change very much during your adventure. Occasionally, a particular paragraph may give you instructions to increase or decrease your SKILL score. Your SKILL score can never exceed its *Initial* value – unless you are specifically instructed otherwise.

Stamina

Your STAMINA score will change frequently during your adventure as you combat deadly monsters and undertake strenuous tasks. As you near your goal, your STAMINA level may drop dangerously low and battles may become particularly risky, so be careful!

You start this adventure without any Provisions, but will acquire some at an early stage. You may only eat Provisions when the option to do so is given in the text, and may only ever eat one meal at a time. Eating a meal restores 4 STAMINA points. On occasion you will be told that you have to eat Provisions: these compulsory meals restore STAMINA just like the optional ones, though obviously if you are at or close to full STAMINA when told that you must eat, some or all of the STAMINA gain will be wasted.

Luck

Additions to your LUCK score may occasionally be awarded in the adventure after you have been particularly Lucky. As with SKILL and STAMINA, your LUCK score may never exceed its *Initial* value.

Equipment

You are armed with an old but serviceable sword. You are also equipped with a Rucksack, and will acquire additional equipment before embarking on your quest. It is probable that you will accumulate further belongings as your adventure continuse. Indeed, at times you will be explicitly told that you take or retain something: when this happens, you must add the object in question to your Equipment List. You may only discard items when the text says that you can or must do so.

Hints on Play

This adventure works like any other *Fighting Fantasy* adventure. As always, don't read the paragraphs consecutively (as they won't make much sense!) but instead follow the numbers as you are instructed.

Don't expect to get through to the end of the adventure the first time: it is both difficult and deadly, and will require several attempts.

BACKGROUND

The bad dreams are back.

There was a time when your whole life was a nightmare. Orphaned and enslaved on the same day. Compelled by a magical collar to do the bidding of the Orcs and Goblins who worked for the monster that was your mistress, and regularly kicked and beaten no matter how well you did your work. Bullied even by many of your fellow slaves, who took out their frustrations on you because, as a child, you were the easiest victim. Never enough food, never enough sleep. And, worst of all, the constant fear that this might be the day on which she chose to feed on you, turning you into one of her loathsome undead minions.

And then, thirty years ago, the horror ended. Someone finally managed to kill her, and the slaves rose up against the brutes that chose to serve her. You were lucky that day: not long before the uprising, you had been dragged into the kitchens for extra chores because one of the staff had been killed in a brawl, so you already had a knife in your hand when the fighting broke out. Doubly lucky: one of the others working in the kitchens at that time took pity on you, protected you in the midst of the chaos that raged as your oppressors were made to pay for their crimes, took you with him on the trek back to civilisation, and found you a new home with relatives of his who had a smallholding.

For years afterwards, though, sleep took you back to the nightmare, your dreams filled with brutish green faces, the icy visage of the beast your captors worshipped, and the terrible beauty of the bloodsucking witch who had held your fate in her chill grasp. You were made to sleep in the hayloft, so your screams wouldn't wake the rest of the household. But gradually the bad dreams became less frequent as the memories, like the scars, faded. The last one was almost twenty years ago.
Until last night. Mercifully, you can remember little of what went through your head before you woke in a cold sweat, your breathing constricted as if that infernal collar were still there to choke the defiance out of you. But one image persists: her face, eyelids closed but starting to creep open, and a malignant grin displaying her fangs.

The terrors fade with the coming of dawn, but whenever your mind wanders during the subsequent day, the sight of that evil smile returns. Eventually you decide to do something about it, and in the evening you head down to the village to see Reniso, your rescuer and oldest friend.

As always, he is delighted to see you, but you can tell that something is troubling him. Before you can say anything, he holds up a hand to indicate that you should wait. Only when the two of you are seated by the fire, a mug of ale in hand, does he ask, "You saw her too?"

You nod, and ask if he thinks it means anything.

"I think it might. It's something I've feared ever since what happened during the fight with One-Tusk."

All the battles from back then have blurred together. One-Tusk was the nickname of one of the Orcs that used to boss you around, but in your mind, his fate is indistinguishable from that of any other of your brutish overseers, and you admit that you have no idea what Reniso is talking about.

"Really? I wouldn't have thought any of us could forget..." He pauses to reflect and, knowing his mannerisms, you suppress the urge to ask what he means. He will tell you when he is ready – and does so a few moments later. "I had assumed that we all felt it, but maybe I was wrong. For just a second, maybe not even that long," he tugs at his shirt collar, a glimmer of sweat appearing on his brow, "the collar became active again, tightened just a twinge."

A sip of ale removes the sudden dryness of your mouth.

"Still don't remember? No, I can see that this is new to you. But that's why I was so determined to get the damned things cut off as soon as I could. And I've had to live with that memory ever since. Had to face the possibility that she might not be dead after all. So I started looking for the one weapon that could defeat her if she did come back."

"A stake?" you ask.

Reniso gives a sad smile. "If only it were that easy. No, I mean this." He taps his left temple. "Knowledge. Find out where she got her power, and maybe we could use it against her. Or at least keep her from using it."

His words call to memory the monstrous being she served, and your eyes widen in horror.

Noting your reaction, he hurriedly explains, "Not the Demon. That gave her some power, it's true, but more than that, it led her to another source. The Crystal Caves were carved out around the ruins of an ancient civilisation, maybe even from before the Splitting. And it was what she found down in that lost city that was the source of most of her power."

"So what did she find?" you ask.

He scowls. "I only have fragments. Much of the knowledge dating back to those days has been lost, or destroyed. I always had it in mind to take a proper expedition to the Caves and see what I could find out, but part of me didn't want to go back."

The idea of returning to those hellish caves fills you with dread, but not as much as the possibility that she might be back. Summoning up all your courage, you suggest that you could make that expedition.

"That's very good of you, my friend, but you wouldn't achieve much by trekking out there on your own. How would you know where to look, or even what to look for?."

"I could at least try," you protest.

"Young people, always so impatient. I'm not saying not to go, just to wait a bit. I recently learned of a scholar in Salamonis who's been piecing together much of what little does survive from back then, and persuaded him to send me some of his findings. What he's written taught me more in three days than all my years of study.

"And that's not all. He's going to come up here and take a look at what I've discovered. Should already be on his way. If we can convince him to accompany us – yes, us: it's high time I stopped letting my fears hold me back – then with the help of his knowledge, and your strength, I might just have a chance of finding what we need to ensure that the witch never returns. Or, if she's already back, to kill her again, but this time for good."

You agree to wait for the scholar, but point out that it would be better to start preparing for the expedition at the earliest opportunity, so you'll be ready to go as soon as he arrives. For some time you and Reniso discuss what you're likely to need, stopping only when he becomes too tired to carry on. Before you leave, he warns you not to speak of tonight's conversation with anyone. "Not all of her followers died back then, you know. I've seen signs that there's still a cult devoted to her. If they should hear of our plans, our lives wouldn't be worth two coppers."

As you trudge back home, your head whirls with thoughts of the coming ordeal, long-buried memories of life as a slave, and troubling ideas of what could happen if the Snow Witch has somehow returned to life, or, worse, to undeath. When you get in, you search through what clutter you have accumulated over the years until you find the sword you looted from a dead Goblin back when you had to fight your way out of the Crystal caves at Reniso's side. When you finally get to bed, sleep is slow in coming, and troubled by more bad dreams.

The following morning you seek out Stef and Pita, your employers these last few decades, and the closest thing you have to family (which isn't that close, to be honest, but at least they never mistreated you), and tell them that you may have to leave soon. They are a little sorry to hear this, as you have been a good worker, but accept that when you have to go, you have to go. And until that time comes, you can carry on working at their smallholding for the usual wage. They never were particularly given to displays of emotion.

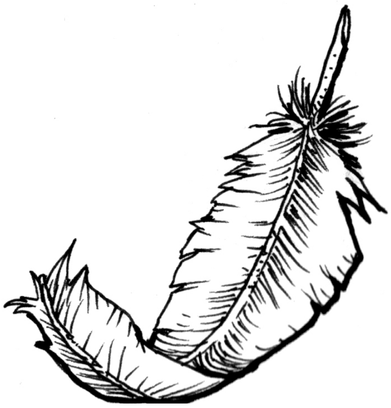
After a morning in the lower field, you bolt your lunch and hurry into the village to call on Reniso again. There is no answer when you knock, but the door is ajar, so you step inside. At the sight which awaits you within, you freeze in horror, the door slipping from your numbed grasp to swing closed behind you.

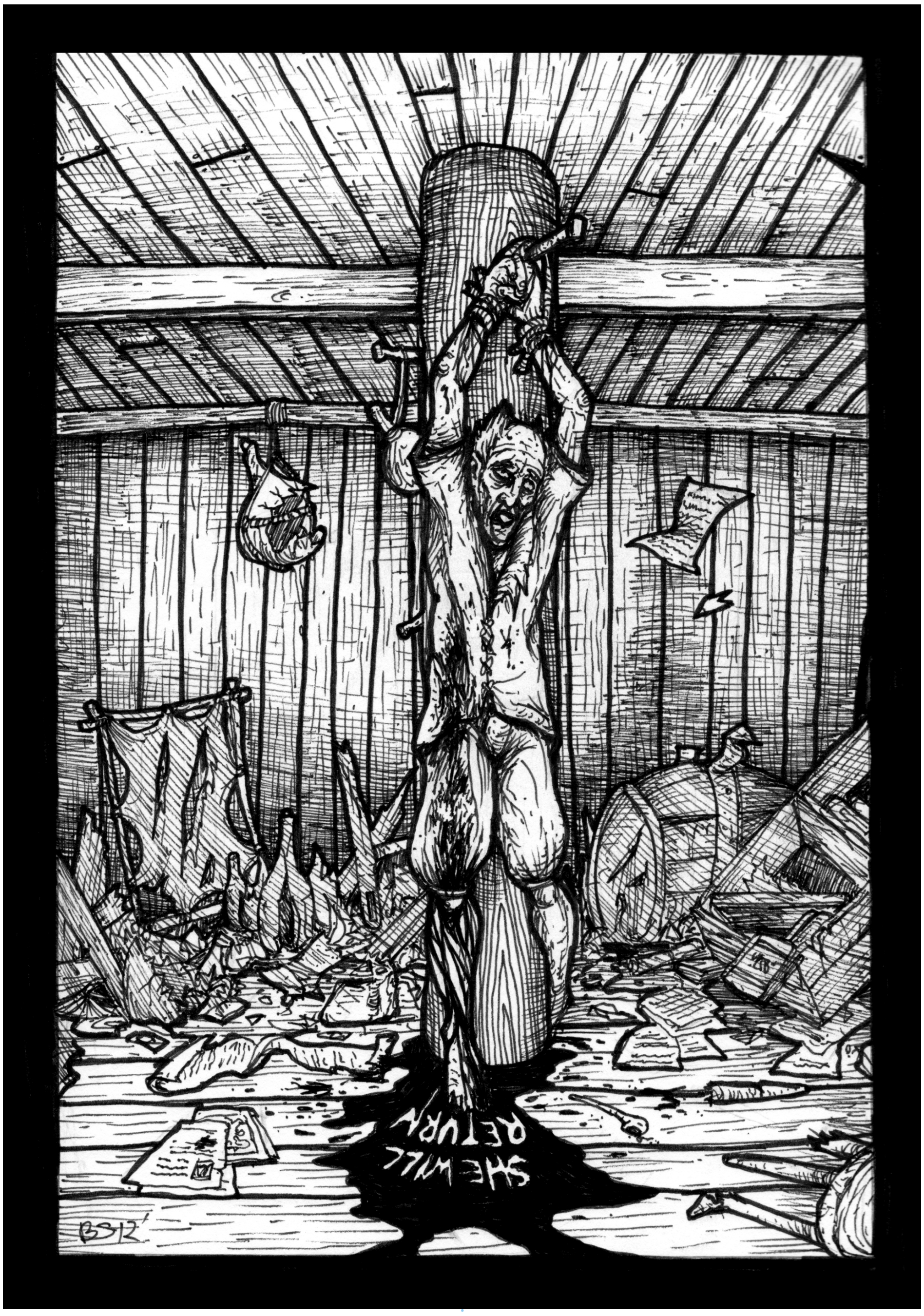
The normally tidy interior of the hut is in an appalling state, with broken furniture, smashed pottery and torn pages of books scattered around. The place has not just been ransacked: this looks like wilful destruction, chaos for chaos' sake.

But the ruin of Reniso's home and belongings is only an incidental detail compared to what has been done to their owner. Bound to the central wooden pillar that supports the roof is his lifeless body, the right side of his jerkin and breeches heavily stained with blood from the wound that claimed his life. The expression on his face indicates that his death was far from painless, and you notice that something small and white protrudes from between his lips.

Even worse is what you see on the floor in front of him. A final message, written by repeatedly dipping the tip of his right foot in the blood that has puddled on the floor beneath him. Though smudged and smeared, the letters are still clear enough to make out, spelling out the dread warning, 'SHE WILL RETURN'...

Turn to paragraph **1**.





1

You stare at your old friend's corpse with mingled sorrow, horror and growing anger. You will make whoever is responsible for this pay, with their own lives and that of their vile mistress. Lifting your gaze once more to Reniso's face, twisted in the agonies of death, you vow to avenge his murder.

Again you notice the thing sticking out of his mouth, and you wonder what it could be. Do you dare try and remove it to find out (turn to **92**) or would you rather leave his body alone, and immediately set off to do what you can to thwart the plans of his killers (turn to **204**)?

2

You grip the hilt of the Flame Sword, considering where best to strike a blow against the Demon. As Denati realises your intent, his eyes widen in horror. "Are you insane? The... thing might be sleeping now, but if you hurt it, there's no telling what it might do in retaliation. Don't assume that it's powerless just because it seems to be trapped down here. Let sleeping Demons lie."

Will you take the scholar's advice (turn to **103**) or are you determined to make the most of this opportunity to strike a blow against the creature which has cast a dark shadow over so much of your life (turn to **129**)?

3

With a vicious shove you break away from the ice that grips you, tearing the skin from the palms of your hands. Lose 4 STAMINA points and 2 SKILL points. The coffin teeters on the edge of the bridge, and then topples over into the ravine. You are too preoccupied with the pain of your flayed fingers to notice what happens to the coffin after that, but eventually your hands become numb enough that you can focus on other matters. Even if you have not destroyed the Snow Witch completely, you have almost certainly made it impossible for any remaining followers of hers to retrieve her body and revive it. Only time will tell whether or not your hands will heal well, but you feel elated at having succeeded all the same. Turn to **49**.

4

The following morning you set off as soon as the rising sun provides sufficient light that you can continue on your way, and the exercise helps banish the tiredness lingering after your bad night. Denati does not find it easy to keep up with you, and several times you have to deliberately slow your pace for his sake. He apologises for holding you back, but encourages you by saying that, even at his pace, you should be able to reach your goal before the end of the day.

Roll one die. If you roll a:

1	turn to **134**.
2	turn to **159**.
3	turn to **271**.
4	turn to **45**.
5	turn to **199**.
6	turn to **215**.

5

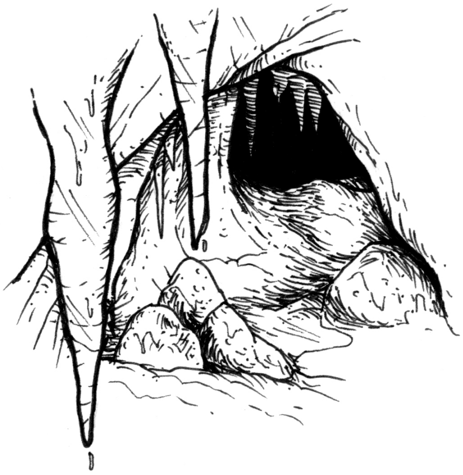
You have lost 4 STAMINA points. As you struggle to your feet again, a horrifying sight meets your eyes. The Snow Witch is sitting up in her coffin, stretching as if just awoken from a restful sleep. She turns her head to look at you, baring her fangs in a smile that makes the one from your nightmares look friendly by comparison.

Filled with a fury you would never have imagined yourself capable of, you draw a weapon and stagger towards the coffin. Your hated enemy may have somehow cheated death, but you will do everything you can to ensure that her new life will not last for long. If you are armed with the Flame Sword, turn to **148**. If you are using any other weapon, turn to **217**.

6

With a vigorous tug you pull away, and the hand maintains its grip on yours, but its wrist snaps, leaving a hole through which the die falls. You stumble backwards a few steps... and then you find yourself clutching onto a key carved from ice, with no sign of the metal hand you were holding, or being held by, a moment ago. Nor is there any trace of the hole created when it broke off.

Putting these strange goings-on out of your mind, you turn your attention to the key. Being made of ice, it is not likely to last long if you take it with you, which strongly suggests that it is intended for use in the keyhole set into the side of the pillar. Crouching down, you slide it into the lock. It fits, and turns smoothly. Turn to **130**.



7

After about twenty metres, the passage bends round to the east, and not much further on it ends in a drop of about two metres to the floor of another cave. Something at the very edge of the illumination provided by your lantern catches your eye, and you move a bit closer to investigate. Your foot comes down on a transparent patch of ice, causing you to slide over the edge and land in a heap on the ground below. Lose 2 STAMINA points.

As you look around this new cave, it becomes clear that what attracted your attention is one of several frozen corpses dangling from the roof, all of them head down. A wail and a thud from behind you indicate that Denati has fallen foul of the same slippery spot that brought you down here. Once you have checked that he is not seriously hurt, you raise your lantern to show him the bodies. If you possess a sheet of parchment with markings that may be in Dwarvish, turn to **102**. If you do not have this item, turn to **200**.

8

Some distance to the left, you espy a mound of snow-covered boulders that you might be able to use for some cover, which could slightly improve your odds in battle, so you urge Denati to go that way. He does as you say, but is too worn out to move quickly, and you soon draw level with him. Grabbing him by the arm, you drag him onwards at a slightly faster pace. However, after less than twenty metres, his legs give way beneath him and he slumps to the ground, sobbing. You cannot bring yourself to abandon the old man where he has fallen, instead turning to face the closest of your pursuers, determined not to go down without a fight.
One Snow Wolf and Two Toa-Suo outpace the rest of the pack, and you meet them, sword in hand. Fight these three opponents simultaneously.

	SKILL	STAMINA
SNOW WOLF	7	7
First TOA-SUO	6	9
Second TOA-SUO	6	10

As soon as you have killed one of them, turn to **171**.

9

You clear a patch of the floor from which you can get a good view of the eastern sky through the hole in the roof, but not directly beneath the hole, so you will have some shelter if it should snow during the night.
If you have not yet eaten today, you must do so now, and can regain up to 4 STAMINA points if you are at less than full health. If you ate before, and your STAMINA is still below its Initial level, you may eat again.

It is possible that these caves are still inhabited, or that some of the Snow Witch's followers may have found another way into them, so you and Denati will take turns to stand guard while the other sleeps. You decide to take the first watch. If you have acquired anything since descending into this cavern (retrieving your rope does not count), turn to **197**. If you have nothing more than you brought with you, turn to **112**.

10

With a sharp crack, one of the icicles directly overhead snaps off, plummeting straight towards you. Roll one die or *Test your Luck*. If you get an odd number or are Lucky, you react quickly enough to dodge out of its way, and it smashes harmlessly on the ground. If you get an even number or are Unlucky, the falling icicle hits you. Roll the die again, and deduct that many STAMINA points. If you survive this incident, return to the final paragraph of **216** and roll again.

11

You go first, and move as far as the rope will permit. Turning to face your companions, you see that Denati has forgotten to transfer the rope to Nowri, and yell at him to do so.

“Let him go first,” calls back Nowri. “He doesn’t need the two of us to haul him up that slope.”

Rather than waste time arguing, you brace yourself so as to improve the likelihood of being able to bear the old man’s weight if he should slip, and watch as he inches along the ledge towards you. Once he catches up to you, he pulls off his gloves and begins to fumble with the knot at his waist.

Nowri tuts with impatience and tells him, “Oh, don’t bother. It’s a nice wide ledge. I don’t need anyone to hold my hand.”

You warn her not to take unnecessary risks, but she ignores you and begins to advance along the ledge. Wide-eyed with alarm, Denati gnaws on his knuckles as he watches her approach. Suddenly a loud screech sounds from overhead. Turn to **250**.

12

You do not manage to get out of the way, and the Stag ploughs into you, hitting you forcefully with its antlers and knocking you back down the ridge you had just climbed. You narrowly miss colliding with Denati, who watches with concern as you tumble several metres to more level ground. Lose 6 STAMINA points. If you survive, you motion to the scholar to stay where he is, and slowly and painfully climb back up to join him. Cautiously continuing up until you can peer over the top of the ridge, you see that the Stag has moved away, and hurry onwards before it can come back here again. Turn to **210**.

13

You drag open the more functional of the gates, which creaks loudly. The passageway beyond is not illuminated, so you must again rely on your lantern to light your way. You pass through several large rooms, and Denati comments on what must have been their function back when they were in use, based on the remnants of furniture or other items that they contain: one was an armoury, another a dining hall, a third a dormitory...

“And, if the account in the Vynheim remnant is correct, we should find our objective somewhere beyond here,” he tells you, indicating a low stone door with more Cyrantian symbols carved into its surface. “The Hall of Contenders, where all who had distinguished themselves in the Arena were laid to rest along with their treasured possessions after they died. Would you mind opening the door? It looks likely to be very stiff, and I’m not the man I once was.”

With some effort you manage to force it open, and descend a short flight of steps into a cold, echoey chamber containing rows of stone coffins, standing on end.

“I made some notes in case we found our way here. Would you mind letting me have that lantern while I check them?”

You are reluctant to hand over your only light source while in this mausoleum, and remind Denati that he has a lantern of his own. Once you have helped him light it, he pores over several sheets of paper, trying to work out where to go from this place. Impatient, yet unwilling to move too far away from him in case there is anyone – or anything – dangerous close by, you turn your attention to your immediate surroundings, and give a start as the radiance of your lantern reveals a scowling face close by. Turn to **75**.

14

If the Shaman succeeded in extinguishing the fire, your first step is to extract your tinderbox from your backpack and get some decent illumination back. After that, or as soon as the fight is over if you were able to keep the Barbarian from putting out the light, you help Denati to his feet. He is slightly dazed from the blow struck against him, but the damage does not appear to be serious.

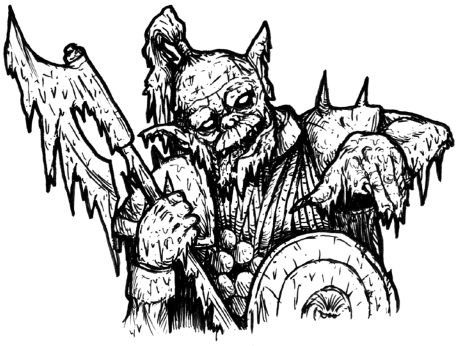
Having made sure that your companion is all right, you now turn your attention elsewhere. If you have an iron key, turn to **56**. Otherwise, turn to **198**.

15

The passage leads into a spacious chamber with a stone pillar in its centre The pillar. is pentagonal with inscriptions on it, and grouped around it are several carved stone benches in varying states of disrepair. Each side of the pillar is lined up with one of the many exits from the chamber.

Examining the pillar, Denati excitedly tells you, “It’s the Cyrantian equivalent of a signpost, and indicates that we’re almost where we need to be. Just through there.” He indicates one of the passages that lead out of the chamber.

Unless the Snow Witch’s followers have perished on their way here, it is likely that you will end up confronting them soon, and this is likely to be your last opportunity to stop for a meal before facing your foes and avenging Reniso’s murder. If you wish to, you may now eat Provisions. Once you are ready to move on, turn to **100**.



16

No oversized thug is going to intimidate you into turning back now you have come this far. You lash out with your sword the moment the Giant comes into striking range.

FROST GIANT SKILL 10 STAMINA 10

Fight one round against this opponent. If you win it, turn to **78**. If you do not wound the Giant, do not adjust your STAMINA, but turn immediately to **115**.

17

After a while the passage widens out into a small chamber with a frozen fountain in its centre. On your right, a flight of worn stone steps leads up and around to a passage entrance high up in the right wall. Directly across the chamber is the foot of a second stairway, in better condition, which ascends to the same exit. If you wish to take a closer look at the fountain, turn to **237**. If you want to leave at once via the closer steps, turn to **136**. If you would rather use the ones on the far side of the chamber, turn to **105**.

18

Laughing derisively, the Snow Witch raises a hand to block your attack, then recoils in pain and alarm as the blade cuts her palm. No blood falls from the wound, but you are encouraged by the knowledge that she is vulnerable to your weapon, and press your attack.

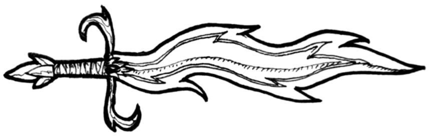
SNOW WITCH SKILL 12 STAMINA 20

The Flame Sword only inflicts 2 STAMINA damage with each blow you land on the Snow Witch, but using LUCK will change the damage as outlined in the rules.

If you should ever get a double while rolling to determine your opponent's Attack Strength, do not resolve that Attack Round, but turn immediately to **46**. If you win this fight, turn to **61**.

19

For what seems like hours you watch the multitude of beasts moving away along the valley. At one point a chorus of excited yelping from the Wolves startles you, and you momentarily fear that they have scented you, but the pack converges on some other, less fortunate creature on the far side. The sound of the Wolves and their Toa-Suo masters tearing their prey apart convinces you of the need for caution, and you remain where you are, restricting your movements to what is necessary to keep you from freezing or losing the circulation in your extremities, until some time after it becomes difficult to distinguish the creatures' white fur from the snow around them. Then you and Denati hurry across the valley as quickly as your stiff limbs will permit. Turn to **170**.



20

Suddenly you make out an overhanging rocky shelf to your left, and make haste across to the space beneath it. It is not particularly big, and you have to crouch down to get in. When Denati joins you, it becomes an even tighter squeeze. Still, as the intensity of the raging storm increases, you are glad to have found this shelter, as you cannot see how anything could survive exposure to the full force of the squall.

Gradually the blizzard's fury diminishes, and eventually you feel confident that it is safe to emerge (crawling through the thick layer of snow that has accumulated beyond the edge of the rock) and carry on up the side of the mountain once more. Turn to 210.

21

At one point you have to take a large step across a pile of bones on the floor. Denati is not able to stretch as far as you, and his foot comes down on a well-gnawed thighbone, which snaps with a loud crack. At once the Dragon turns its head towards you, and you hurriedly grab for a weapon as the creature moves to the attack. Turn to 72.

22

The symbols carved into the die indicate it to be a Cyrantian artefact. Examining it, Denati becomes more excited than you have ever seen him before. "We've known for years that games and contests were associated with the god most widely worshipped by the Cyrantians, but this is the first time I've seen a gaming implement that is also a religious item. This face shows the name of their god."

He turns the bone cube over, scrutinising its other faces. "I wonder what it was used for. Here's the glyph that means 'strength' in their script… This could open up whole new areas in Cyrantian studies. Always assuming I ever make it back to Salamonis, that is."

Muttering to himself, the aged scholar shuffles off to get some rest, leaving you to keep watch. Pocketing the die once more, you think about the undead Orc from which you acquired it, and begin to wonder how many more such horrors infest these caves. Your imagination peoples the darkness beyond the light of your lantern with all manner of terrors and, realising that you are making yourself jumpy, you try to focus on the fact that you mean to destroy the source of the evil that infests the mountain. Turn to **137**.

23

The interior of the depression splits along the dividing lines, the segments curling upwards a little like a flower opening – except that a flower's petals are fixed at the centre, whereas the segments of the bowl are all attached at the rim. But as they open up, they reveal a second recess that had been concealed beneath the first, this one containing a key carved from ice. You reach in and take it, and as you withdraw your hand, the segments drop back into place in rapid sequence, the die falling down into the hole beneath them as they do. Once the last segment has returned to its position, the dividing lines fade as if they had never been there.

If the key is not intended for use here, there seems little point to it, as it is liable to start melting if you put it in your pocket or backpack. Hoping that this is not some convoluted trick, you stoop and try the key in the hole on the side of the shrine. It fits. You turn it. Turn to **130**.

24

Time seems to slow down as your leap propels you through the air across the coffin. You see your free hand, outstretched in front of you, the falling icicle in front of it, your fingers and thumb drawing together as the gap between your hand and the icicle narrows... And then everything is at normal speed again, and you have the icicle clutched in your hand, held triumphantly in the air, as you hit the ground. You roll onto your back, sit up, stand, and walk back to the side of the dying man, hurling the icicle to the ground in front of his face so that in his last few moments he can see it, and his hopes, shatter. Turn to **122**.

25

A short distance beyond the corner, the passage passes beneath a large stone arch. Two faces have been carved on the right side of the arch, and another two on its left. On each side, one face is looking up, the other down, one to the right, the other to the left, so no two are facing the same way. Each face has distended cheeks and pursed lips, as if blowing hard. Several symbols have been engraved upon the central span of the arch, and a few more adorn a wooden sign in remarkably good condition which hangs to the right of the archway.

Beyond the arch you can see what looks to be a spacious cavern, its floor strewn with what appears to be broken glass.

"Can you hold the lantern closer to the inscription, please?" asks Denati, and you do so, enabling him to read and translate the symbols. "It says, 'Chamber of the Four Winds'. Rather obvious, really."

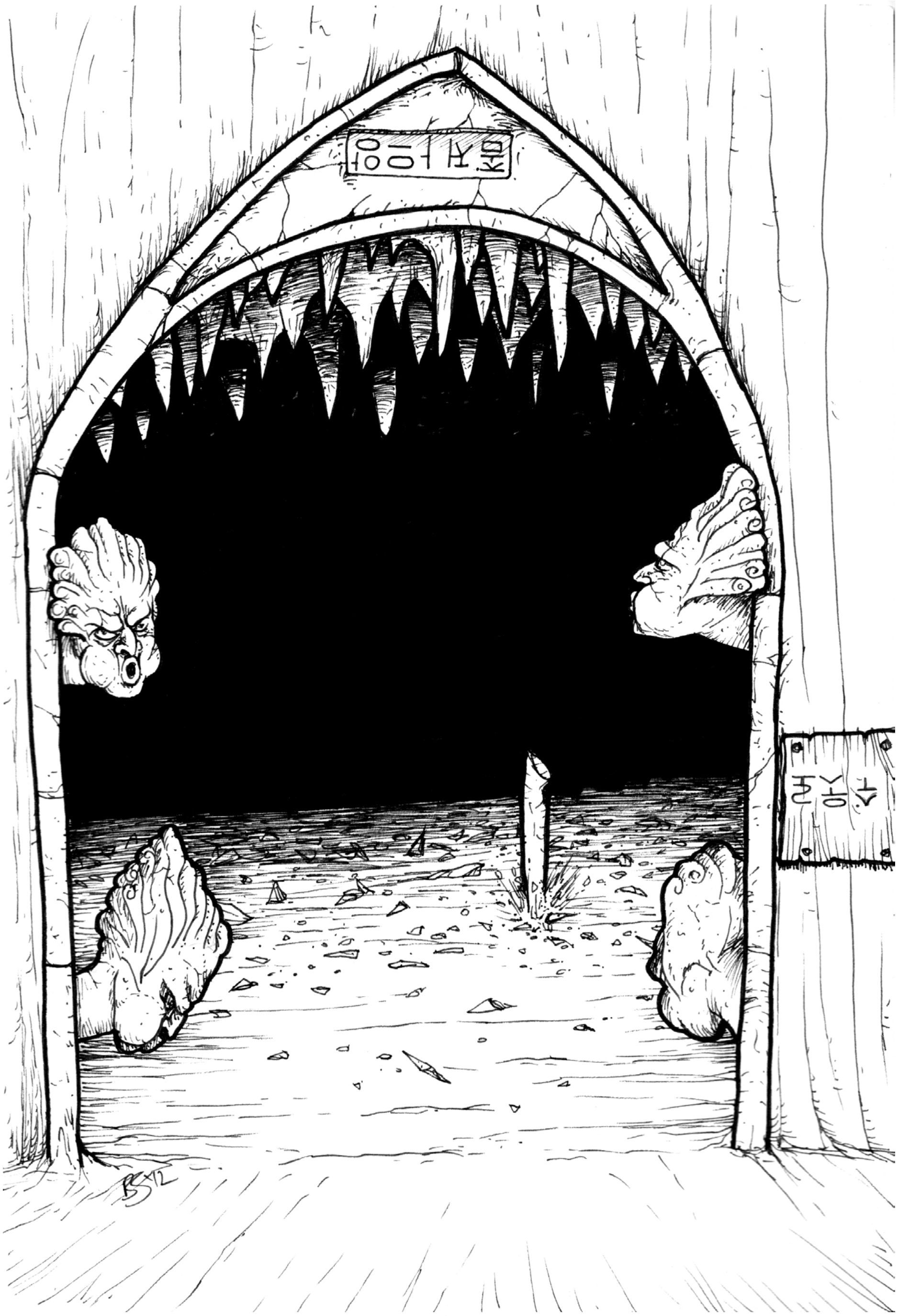
You ask about the wooden sign, and as the scholar reads it, his face falls. "That's a good deal less poetic, but potentially a lot more useful. 'Beware falling icicles', it says."

Looking through the arch again, you realise that what you took for broken glass is actually ice; the shattered fragments of dozens of icicles. Looking up, you can make out the points of many more icicles which still hang from the roof of the cavern, and even as you watch, one of them breaks loose and falls to smash on the ground below.

If you want to risk crossing the Chamber of the Four Winds, turn to **249**. If you would rather return to the junction and try the downward-sloping passage, turn to **146**.

26

Colpas pesters you and Denati with unnecessary questions for several minutes, then tires of his 'fun' and allows the two of you past.



Despite his age, Denati is able to maintain a good pace, and you reach the trading post at the foot of the Icefinger Mountains before dusk. Food and shelter are available for a small price, so you choose to spend the night there and save your own supplies for the days ahead (if you have been waiting for a chance to eat, this does count as one). It also provides you with an opportunity to ask about other people who are heading up into the mountains, but if Reniso's killers passed through the trading post, they did so without rousing any suspicion.

During the night you are troubled by further nightmares, the monstrous visages of the Snow Witch and her minions now joined by the sight of Reniso's dead body. They cause you to cry out in your sleep, attracting complaints and the occasional thrown boot from other travellers spending the night at the trading post.

The following morning you are up with the sun, and quickly resume your northward journey. Turn to **150**.

27

Before the sword can connect with the Demon's flesh, a forked tongue darts from its mouth and coils around your neck, lifting you from the ground and hurling you against the wall with bone-breaking force. Unfortunately for you, the injuries you sustain, while agonising, are not fatal. The Demon has had no entertainment since the sacrifices up above ended, and now that it has a new toy to play with, it will do everything within its power to prolong the amusement it gets from your suffering.

28

The smell of oil fills your nostrils, and you realise that Denati has emptied his unlit lantern over you, presumably in the hope that the oil will provide sufficient lubrication that you can wriggle out of the tight squeeze you are in. Holding your own lantern as far away from yourself as possible to minimise the risk of accidentally setting yourself alight, you desperately wriggle and, to your immense relief, find that you are now able to move a little. You take another 2 points of STAMINA damage as different parts of you scrape against the walls which grip you, but at last you make it through to a wider passage on the far side of the crack. While you wipe as much of the oil off as you can, Denati follows you through the crevice. Once he has made it through, you tell him off for taking such a risk with the oil. He shrugs. “It worked, didn’t it? Now, where does this lead?”
Shaking your head at his lack of common sense, you put your pack back on and advance further into the mountain. Turn to **124**.

29

“Caves contain bad magic,” snarls the Barbarian. “Evil men seek it.” You try to explain that you intend to fight the evil, but he is not listening to you any more, and strides forwards, brandishing his club. You have no choice but to defend yourself against his misguided attack.

BARBARIAN SKILL 9 STAMINA 9

In his zeal to destroy those he believes to be evil, the Barbarian will fight to the death. If you survive the fight, turn to **126**.

30

“You’re actually prepared to fight?” calls the woman as you raise your sword. “Well, you’ve got guts! But not for much longer.” She jabs at your midriff, and you only just manage to parry her blow. This is not going to be an easy fight.

WARRIOR SKILL 11 STAMINA 14

The blade of her sword radiates heat, and will burn as well as cut any time she hits you, so every wound she inflicts will cause you 3 points of damage (2 if you successfully *Test your Luck* to minimise its effect, and 4 if you use LUCK but are Unlucky).
If you survive the battle, turn to **116**.

31

You have built up too much forward momentum to be able to stop in time. As your movements bring you closer to the edge, you are relieved to see that beyond it is not a sheer drop: instead, the downward slope continues, but at a much steeper angle. Your relief is only momentary, as your foot comes down on the other side of the edge and slips out from beneath you. You fall backwards, your lantern flying from your hand to clatter down the slope ahead of you, leaving you in darkness as you land awkwardly on the sharp slope. Though unable to see, you can feel that you are now sliding down, your speed increasing with every passing second.

A wail from behind and above you indicates that Denati has also got into difficulties, but right now his predicament is only a minor concern for you. A small pool of light up ahead shows that the floor levels out again, and your lantern has come to rest there, amazingly still alight despite everything it has been through. You can only hope that you will also survive the landing at the bottom of the slope, which is getting closer and closer… Turn to **155**.

32

You raise your lantern, hoping to be able to find an icicle here, rather than having to cross that bridge again. Unless you could hack a sliver of ice from the bridge itself and use that as a weapon. Or would that not count as an icicle?

The light reveals a few hanging from the cavern ceiling, high up above the coffin, out of easy reach, and you start thinking of plans to help you get to them. Could you throw something up and knock one down? Would Denati be able to reach if you lifted him up? Might the coffin bear your weight and enable you to leap up and grab an icicle?

“There are some over there,” points out the scholar. Turning, you see that he is right. The ceiling slopes down behind you, and several fat icicles are, if not within easy reach, at least much more accessible. You hurry over to try and fetch one down. Roll two dice. If the total is less than or equal to your SKILL score, turn to **90**. If it exceeds your current SKILL, turn to **242**.

33

As you pass between the two skeletons, they both lunge at you. Roll two dice. If the total is lower than or equal to your SKILL score, turn to **114**. If it exceeds your current SKILL, turn to **209**.

34

Do you want to start with the lone cadaver near the plinth (turn to **245**) or the two corpses in the vicinity of the tunnel mouth (turn to **162**)?

35

It occurs to you that fire might be an effective weapon against this denizen of the icy peaks. If you were recently covered in oil, the risk of setting yourself alight is too great to make it worth pursuing this line of thought. Otherwise, you may investigate the possibility that the Dragon might fear a flame by turning to **169**. If you dare not use fire, or would simply prefer to attack the Dragon with a hand weapon, turn to **72**.

36

Getting back through the narrow cave mouth and down into the defile is an awkward and undignified process, but before long you and Denati are back on the ground and resume your trek up through the gorge.

Eventually the two of you emerge into an open stretch of mountainside. Denati points at the trail of churned-up snow leading off to the east. “That must be where those Giants came from. It might lead to a settlement of the brutes. I think we’d do better to stay away from it.”

You agree, and press on to the north, veering to the west whenever it becomes impossible to head directly northwards. Gradually the sun sinks in the sky, and before it gets too dark for you to be able to see your way, you find a suitably sheltered spot where you can make camp for the night. If you have not yet eaten today, you must now use Provisions (though this compulsory meal will still restore STAMINA if you are below your *Initial* level). If you ate back in the cave, and are still at less than full STAMINA, you may have another meal now.
You and Denati take it in turns to sleep, the other keeping watch for further hostile inhabitants of the mountains, but further nightmares are all that trouble you during the night. Turn to **4**.

37

Up close, you can see that the animal is a dead Snow Fox, its throat cut by a nasty-looking snare. Evidently a trapper is plying his trade way up here, and you had better keep an eye out for any other traps he has left lying around, as getting caught in something like the one into which the Fox blundered could do you a serious injury. You warn Denati to watch his step, and the two of you resume your ascent. Turn to **247**.

38

Despite Denati's reassurances, you are not convinced that the warning sign can be so casually disregarded, and you are on the alert for anything dangerous as you descend the steps towards the central arena, paying scant attention to the scholar's ramblings about some well-preserved feature of the place.

Six other stairways lead down to the centre, and at the top of each is an opening into some other part of the city. While still paying attention to where you are putting your feet, you continually flick your gaze from one opening to another, and then another, in case any should disgorge some centuries-old guard intent on punishing your rule-breaking.

"Over there!" The raising of Denati's voice indicates that he has been expecting a response from you. You look to see that he is pointing at a pair of dilapidated metal-studded gates set into the wall of the central arena, mid-way between the two stairways to your left.

A rattling sound as you tread upon the thin layer of white sand covering the floor of the arena makes you realise that you have been watching out for danger in the wrong place. Turn to **157**.

39

You have been driven to the right wall of the cavern by the wind. This is, obviously, as far right as you can go, and as long as you remain this close to the wall, any further winds from your left will effectively immobilise you. Roll the die again and follow the directions below.

If you roll a 1, the wind dies down, allowing you to move away from the wall. Move one metre to the left, then roll one die, subtract one from the number rolled, and advance that many metres towards the exit.
If you roll a 2, a strong headwind limits forward progress and prevents transverse movement. Roll one die, halve the number rolled (rounding fractions up) and advance that many metres.
If you roll a 3, the wind propels you left, away from the wall. Move left one metre, and roll one die to see how many metres you advance.
If you roll a 4, the wind from behind is so strong that you are too focused on staying upright to change direction. Roll one die, add two, and advance that many metres.
If you roll a 5, you cannot move, and must wait for the wind to change direction. Roll again.
If you roll a 6, turn to **234**.

If you have now advanced 25 metres or more, turn to **172**. If you have yet to get that far, but managed to move left, return to **82** and roll on the table there. Otherwise, roll again and do as directed above.

40

Sorrow turns to anger as you press onwards, and you add Nowri's death to the growing list of things you mean to avenge when you catch up with the Snow Witch's followers. While they were not directly responsible for what happened to her, this expedition is only taking place because their scheme to revive their mistress must be thwarted, so they share some of the blame for the tragic outcome to her joining you on your quest.
The ledge widens as you follow it round, and eventually leads you to a more easily climbable slope. Turn to **210**.

41

The first thing that comes to mind is the worst day of your life: the ambush which claimed the lives of both your parents and delivered you into the clutches of the Snow Witch and her followers. You blurt out something about having been in a caravan that was attacked, feeling somehow ashamed at building your lie on that terrible incident.

The woman tilts her head to the left and frowns. "You're not a very convincing liar."

You cannot bring yourself to deny the accusation, or to meet her gaze.

"Still," she continues, "if you don't want to tell me, it's none of my business. I'm sure I did more good than harm in killing those things, even if you weren't worth saving."

With that, she turns and strides away from you. You stare after her, wondering if you made the right decision, until Denati again attracts your attention and asks you to help him up.

"It was for the best," he tells you. "You never know who might turn out to be serving the enemy."

You continue on your way, eventually reaching a point where the crevasse is narrow enough to step across, after which you are able to head north again.

The remaining hours of daylight pass without any further encounters, and close to sundown you find a mound of stones that offers a little protection from the elements, so you make camp in its shadow. You must eat a meal now, but it will restore STAMINA if you lost any earlier in the day.

You and Denati take it in turns to keep watch during the night, and are mercifully undisturbed by nocturnal predators, though the bad dreams continue to trouble you. Turn to **4**.

42

The pressure of the rock against your back and chest makes it difficult to breathe, and you have to resist the urge to panic, but after only a short distance the crack opens out, and you soon reach a point at which you can turn around and face back the way you came. You call to Denati to let him know that there is a way through, and with much puffing and grunting he follows. After putting your pack back on your back, you advance further into the mountain. Turn to **124**.

43

Suddenly excited, Denati asks to see the die you found in the upper level of the caves. You show it to him and he again studies the symbols on each face.

“Yes, this is what it’s for. You throw the die into the bowl, and it determines the kind of trial you must undergo to prove yourself worthy of the prize, whatever that may be.” He hands the die back to you with a quizzical stare. “Are you willing to face the challenge?”

If you want to cast the die as directed by the carvings, turn to **256**. If you would rather not take the chance, you may leave the shrine and continue along the passage (turn to **17**) or, if you possess an iron key, you could try to see if it fits the lock (turn to **240**).

44

With the traction provided by the boots, you should be able to cross the bridge without much difficulty. To compensate for Denati’s lack of similar footwear, you tie blankets together to make a crude rope (or use your proper rope if you still have that), and leave one end of it with him as you start to cross.

While you do make it across without slipping, it is still immensely disconcerting to have nothing between you and the massive drop on both sides. Once you reach the exit on the far side, you signal to your companion, and he knots the rope around himself and starts to move towards you. As he tentatively advances, you reel in the rope, preparing yourself as best you can to take his weight if he should slip and fall, but your precautions prove unnecessary, as he remains sure-footed all the way across. The crossing is nerve-wracking for him, though, and he almost swoons as he draws level with you. You steady him and, once he is ready to carry on, advance down the passageway ahead of you. Turn to **175**.

45

Early in the afternoon you climb over a ridge, and are greeted by the sight of a large Snow Stag rather optimistically foraging for food. You were not aware that they could be found this far up the mountain, and wonder if the Barbarians or Frost Giants that live somewhere around here could be keeping a herd for food. The Stag lowers its head and shakes its antlers at you. If you attack it, turn to **110**. If you attempt to move past it without disturbing it, turn to **77**. If you keep still and see what the Stag does, turn to **207**.

46

The Snow Witch’s eyes meet yours. They blaze with an intensity like that of the sun, but the light that burns in them is cold and dead. If you are wearing a helmet with a crystal faceplate, turn to **203**. If you do not have the helmet, or are not wearing it at this moment, turn to **133**.

47

“Where are you off to?” asks Denati. You tell him you intend to explore further, and he shakes his head. “There’s no need. This pedestal has an inscription in Cyrantian script that says the rising sun will show the way we should go.”

He looks up through the hole in the roof. “It’s already starting to get dark outside, so I think we should make camp for the night here and wait to see what the light of dawn reveals. If you go wandering off, you risk going on some false trail and getting lost or hurt or even killed. Now we know we can get a sign, we’d best wait for it.”

You concede that he has a point. Turn to **9**.

48

You nimbly leap down to the floor a few metres below. Denati is unwilling to follow your example, and cautiously continues up the stairs, stepping over every other one. Fortune favours him, and he reaches the top unscathed.

Once you see him safely up there, you cross over to the other steps. It dawns on you that they are probably more worn because most people did not want to take the chance of getting hurt, and thus chose to use them. At the top, you rejoin your companion and lead the way into the passage out of the chamber. Turn to **15**.

49

It dawns upon you that your adventure is not yet over. Finding your way out of this city, and getting back down the mountain, will almost certainly confront you with fresh challenges, but you will just have to deal with them as they occur. Whether your homeward journey leads you to lost treasures, new dangers, or both, nothing can change what you have achieved. You have defeated the Snow Witch and her despicable minion, and avenged the murders of your parents and your best friend. More than that, you have banished the shadow which has hung over your life for as long as you can remember, and driven away the nightmares. Whatever the future may hold, you can now face it with hope.

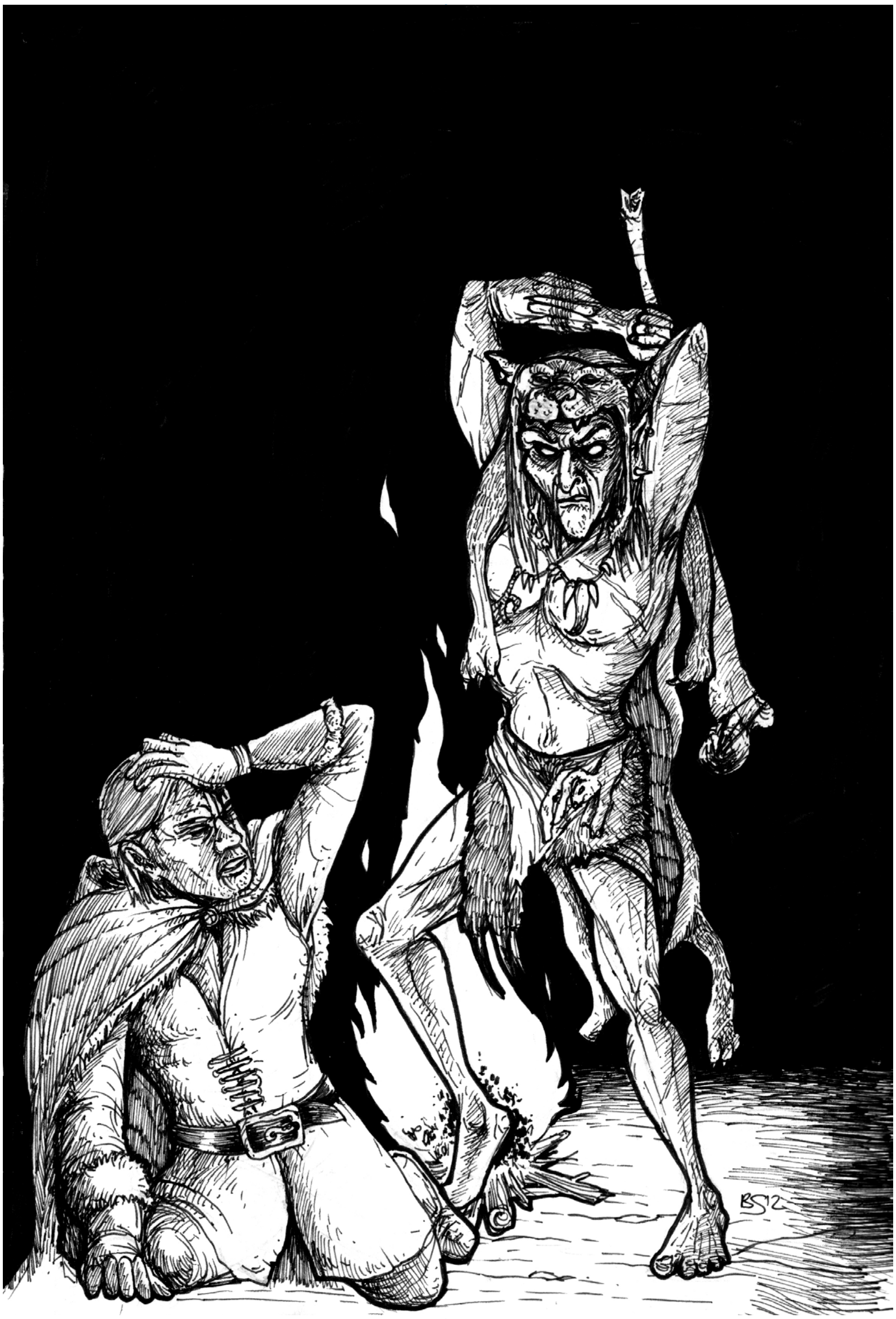
50

The light of the fire illuminates the scrawny frame of an aged Barbarian Shaman, festooned in talismans fashioned from the claws and fangs of local predators. With both hands he holds a large bone club raised above his head, about to strike the prone form of Denati, who cowers at his feet, a livid mark on his brow marking where the Shaman struck him down.

You draw your sword, and the Barbarian turns his attention to you. Though the milky white of blindness clouds his eyes, his inability to see does not appear to handicap him, and you notice him raising a foot to stamp on the fire. Alarmed at the thought of being trapped with this berserk enemy in total darkness, you lash out with your sword.

BARBARIAN SHAMAN SKILL 9 STAMINA 7

If your opponent is first to win an Attack Round, deduct no STAMINA, but turn immediately to **221**. If you strike the first blow, conduct the combat as normal, and turn to **14** if you win.



51

It is another bad night, the image of Reniso's corpse joining the nightmare visions of the Snow Witch and her vile servitors. Morning finds you weary from your troubled sleep but determined to confront the source of the bad dreams, and you set off to the north as soon as Denati is ready to leave.

The elderly scholar is much fitter than you had expected, and the two of you make rapid progress once you are on your way. You reach the trading post at the base of the Icefinger Mountains before midday, and pause there to enquire about strangers, in case Reniso's murderers passed this way. Regrettably, the killers either kept a low profile or avoided the trading post altogether, and you soon continue on your way, no better informed than before.

For several hours you trudge onwards through the thick snow, encountering neither man nor beast, though paw prints running through a valley you traverse late in the afternoon indicate that a large group of at least two types of animal passed this way not that long ago. Denati remarks that he's glad he wasn't here when whatever made the tracks came by, and suggests that you hurry on in case they should come back. You see the wisdom of his words, and pick up your pace. Turn to **170**.

52

Your hands close on nothing but powdery snow, and the slick surface of the crevasse wall provides you with no footholds. You slide further into the chasm behind you, your descent momentarily halted as your chest slips over the lip and your armpits catch on the edge. It is only a brief respite, though, and despite your best efforts to claw your way back up, your own body weight gradually drags you further down. Just before you plummet into the icy rift, the sound of snarling and screaming from behind you indicates that the Toa-Suo and their Wolves have caught up with Denati, but you only have a few seconds in which to feel regret before the fall kills you.

53

Your offering does not appeal to the Leopard. The flesh of your wrist, exposed as you hold out the food, is another matter, and the Leopard closes its jaws on it. Lose 2 STAMINA points and 1 SKILL point. Startled by the bite, you jerk your arm back, unbalancing the Leopard and causing it to fall from on top of the boulder. This causes it to release its grip on your wrist, but it lands agilely on the ground behind you and presses its attack.

SNOW LEOPARD	SKILL 8	STAMINA 11

During the first Attack Round you must draw a weapon, and will be unable to harm the Leopard while doing so. If you win that round, you have merely succeeded in fending it off while you arm yourself. If the Leopard wins the round, you take damage as normal, but will be able to fight back properly afterwards. If you win, you quickly bind up your wounds before continuing to climb towards your goal (turn to **210**).

54

Your companion pulls off his right glove, and brings the jade ring he wears up to his lips. Seeing it close up for the first time, you can now make out that it is carved to resemble a singing face. Denati's cheeks bulge as he blows into the ring, as if it were a whistle, and you are a little surprised to hear no sound.

No sound coming from the ring, at least. Loud cracking noises issue from high up in the chamber beyond the archway, and countless icicles drop to the ground. Roll two dice. If the total is 10 or lower, make a note of the number you rolled and turn to **158**. If you roll 11 or 12, turn to **187**.

55

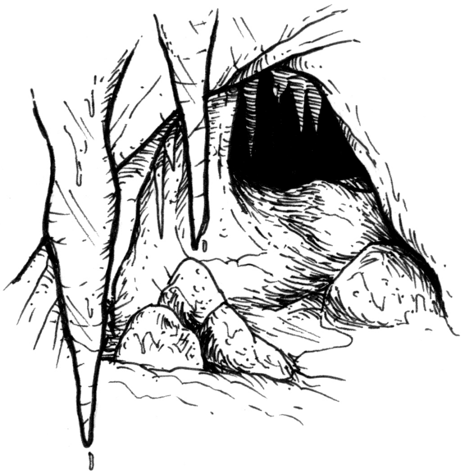
Indicating to Denati to stay where he is until you have investigated the far side of the cave, you edge past one monstrous elbow and out in front of the Demon's chest. As you pass beneath the creature's bowed head, it breathes out, and you gag on the noxious fumes exhaled. Lose 3 STAMINA points. If you survive, you keep moving, now holding your breath, and are pleased to see that there is another way out of the cave, just beyond the Demon's other elbow. Leaning back the way you came until your companion comes into view, you beckon to him to follow you, and then carry on to the exit. Turn to **183**.

56

Though you had hoped that the narrowness of the cave mouth would deter the Frost Giants from pursuing you, one of them has managed to force his arms, shoulders and head through the gap, and is trying to squeeze the rest of his bulk into the cave as well. Seeing that you have noticed him, he roars, "Murderer!" and ineffectually swings a fist at you. Even if there is no way he can get all the way through the opening to attack you, he is blocking the way out, so you will have to do something about him. With a sigh, you draw your sword yet again.

FROST GIANT	SKILL 10	STAMINA 10

Though being jammed into the cave mouth restricts his mobility, in order to get close enough to strike at him, you must move into range of his thrashing arms, so he suffers no penalty to Attack Strength. As soon as you succeed in landing a blow on him, turn to **152**.



57

You misjudge your leap, and only one of your hands grabs onto the lip of the cave mouth. With your other hand you scrabble for a grip, but succeed only in clawing away clumps of the powdery snow that has accumulated on the rocky wall.

A massive hand takes one of your dangling ankles in a bone-crushing grip, and a hefty tug breaks your fingers and your hold on the edge of the cave mouth. Your assailant maintains his hold on your foot as you fall to the sloping floor of the defile, dislocating your leg, and your face sinks into the bloody slush that covers the ground where you fought. You writhe helplessly, unable to break free, and in no condition to get away even if the Giant were to let you go. The other Giant places his huge foot on the back of your head, further limiting your ability to thrash about, and stoops to bring his mouth as close to your ear as is possible in the narrow gorge. "You killed my brother!" he bellows.

Crippled, deafened, and half-suffocated, you can put up no resistance as he gradually increases the pressure of his foot until it reaches your skull's breaking point. After that your death is quick, but far from painless.

58

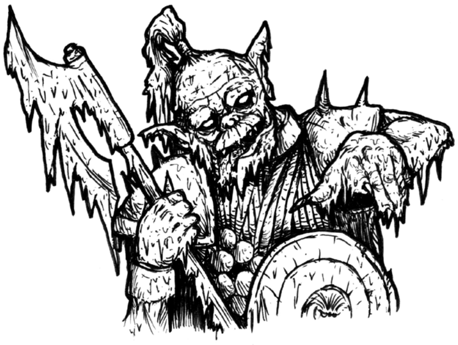
You may eat Provisions while your companion examines the shrine. It is a six-sided bronze pillar a little over a metre high, with symbols carved on its sides, and a bowl-like depression in the top.

Denati scrutinises each side of the pillar in turn, his lips moving as he translates the inscriptions to himself. As he cranes round to see the back, he rests a hand on the edge to steady himself, and with a low rumble the whole pillar rotates slightly. This takes the scholar by surprise, but he manages to keep his balance and, when nothing untoward occurs as a result of his moving the pillar, he asks your assistance in turning it so he can properly see the carvings on its rear. You do as requested, and ask what the symbols mean.

"The first few sides tell of how the god to whom this is dedicated overpowered and imprisoned the Demon through there. This one is about being tested by the god in order to receive some kind of blessing. Would you mind giving it another turn, please? There's still one side I haven't seen."

Again you oblige, and note with some surprise what appears to be a keyhole set into the side thereby revealed. This interests Denati less that the carvings above it, which he slowly translates, speaking the last few words out loud: "...cast the die within the dish."

If you have a bone die, turn to **43**. If not, but you have an iron key and would like to see if it fits the keyhole, turn to **240**. If you have neither, or do not want to try the key in the lock, you have done all you can here, and should move on. Turn to **17**.



59

A faint dragging sound comes to your attention. It comes from somewhere near the centre of the chamber, so Denati cannot be the source. Picking up the lantern, you hold it at arm's length, and slowly advance in the direction from which the noise came, drawn weapon in your other hand. The pool of light around you seems to shrink and grow with each step you take, but reveals nothing out of the ordinary until...

Out of the darkness lumbers an Orc, its body caked with ice and snow, its glazed eyes and lolling head indicating that life has long since departed its frozen frame. And yet it is lurching towards you, a rusting axe clutched in one dangling arm, every movement causing its head to bob just enough to give you a glimpse of the metal collar around its neck. A collar like the one you were once forced to wear, which must be compelling the Orc to obey the commands of its hateful mistress even beyond death. The sight fills you with revulsion, and also a hint of pity: not even an Orc deserves to end up like this.

The fist which grips the axe handle rises to shoulder height, and you raise your own weapon and strike out at the undead travesty that confronts you.

ORC ZOMBIE SKILL 6 STAMINA 6

If you put a final end to the luckless Orc's slavery, turn to **99**.

60

"Caves contain bad magic," growls the Barbarian. You hurriedly explain that you intend to destroy the source of the evil they contain, and he gives a derisive snort, clearly doubting your capability to do so. Nevertheless, he makes no move to interfere with your progress up the mountain. A little nervously, you move past him, and as you continue on your way, he yells, "Go, get yourselves killed, foolish lowlanders!"
Though his contemptuous attitude angers you, you decide not to let the insult provoke you, and continue to climb. Turn to **210**.

61

The flame-shaped blade of your sword pierces the Snow Witch's chest, sinking in right up to its hilt. Her face contorts with pain and rage, and she gasps out the words, "Thirty years!" Then both she and the blade that impales her shatter into hundreds of fragments, which settle like dust in the bottom of the coffin.

Hearing a low moan from the old man you had thought dead, you leap the coffin, intent on dispatching him, but your effort proves unnecessary, as that was his dying utterance. You feel a grim satisfaction in knowing that in his last moments he saw the failure of the evil plan to which he had dedicated so much of his life. Turn to **275**.

62

The Toa-Suo's body slams into you, knocking you backwards into a shallow drift of snow and slightly winding you. Its weight holds you down, and you struggle to fend it off as it swings a clawed paw at your face. Continue to fight your opponent, but until the end of this combat you must deduct 2 from your Attack Strength because of your restricted mobility. If you manage to defeat the beast in spite of your awkward position, turn to **192**.

63

You tell Denati how old Switor must have been, and the scholar hesitantly jabs a finger at first one, then another of the Cyrantian numbers carved on the lid of the younger warrior's tomb. Some unseen force causes the lid to move slowly forwards and slide to the left until the occupant of the coffin is revealed.

The skeleton lying within this sarcophagus is unadorned apart from the boots on its feet. They gleam like metal, but have the appearance of leather, and you suspect that they are made from Dragon skin. You cautiously remove one of the boots, noting that it is still supple despite its great age, and the rough scales covering its sole should provide a good grip on all but the slipperiest of surfaces.

The boots would appear to be the only treasure you can claim here, as the lid from Switor's coffin blocks your access to the numbers carved on the side of Mayar's tomb. Puzzled, as you had gained the impression that both coffins could be opened, you ask Denati for an explanation.

"Well, you have a point. The inscription did refer to claiming 'their prizes'. But there could be a cultural misunderstanding going on here. Remember, the Cyrantians lived a long time ago, and their ways were not exactly like ours. Perhaps, in spite of the use of the plural here, only one treasure could be had. Or maybe we should have opened the older man's sarcophagus first, and that was so self-evident to whoever carved the inscription that they didn't see the need to spell it out. Or something else entirely. For every detail of the Cyrantian way of life we do know, there must be a dozen that have been lost in the mists of antiquity. Consider yourself lucky you managed to get anything at all."

While still a little aggrieved at the possibility of having missed out on more treasure, you can see that there is nothing to be gained by complaining, and decide to get on with what you actually came here to do. Proceed through the Hall of Contenders by turning to **135**.

64

From the bottom, the slope does not look as steep as it seemed when you were sliding down it. Even so, getting back up it will not be easy, and would take a long time. Still, you believe that if you were prepared to hack out handholds and footholds, you should be able to get back up without too much danger of sliding down here again.

A loud gasp sounds from somewhere behind you. Turning, you realise that Denati has given in to curiosity and wandered around the corner. Wondering what could have elicited the shocked response you heard, you follow him, and the sight you behold causes you to abandon all thought of digging away at the ice of the slope. Turn to **184**.

65

Shielding your lantern so that the Dragon has less chance of noticing its gleam, you cautiously pick your way across the cavern floor towards the opening through which the early evening light gleams. Denati follows in your footsteps, repeatedly casting fearful glimpses at the Dragon. Roll one die. If you roll 1~5, turn to **191**. If you roll 6, turn to **21**.

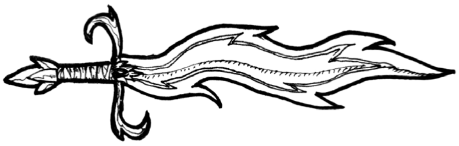
66

You return to the chamber you just left and, with some difficulty, drag part of a broken stone bench along the tunnel leading to the bridge. Deduct 2 STAMINA points for the exertion.

With the broken bench anchoring the rope, you tie the free end around your waist and set out across the bridge, trying hard to focus on the solid ice beneath your feet rather than the drop into darkness on your right and left. Roll two dice. If the total is lower than your SKILL, turn to **195**. If it equals or exceeds your current SKILL score, turn to **238**.

67

The first thing that occurs to you is to try and destroy the ice coffin that seems to be key to the revival of the Snow Witch, but the mightiest blow of which you are capable does not so much as scratch it, and not even pouring lantern oil onto it and setting it alight makes any difference. Exasperated, you kick it, and while the principal outcome of this is that you hurt your foot, the coffin does move very slightly. Inspiration strikes, and you get down beside the coffin and begin to push.



The coffin is heavy, and moving it takes considerable effort. Initially you are also able to grab an edge and pull when more precision is required, but you have to close the lid once you get the coffin to the mouth of the passage leading out of the cavern, as it will not fit otherwise. Still, from that point onwards it is just one slow, arduous shove until you reach the bridge over the crevasse.

If you are wearing metal gauntlets, turn to **205**. If you do not have these items on your hands, turn to **252**.

68

After a short while the wind subsides once more, and you and Denati hasten forward until the winds resume their blowing. Increase the number of times you have advanced by one. If you have now advanced seven times, turn to **113**. Otherwise, return to the last paragraph of **216** and roll again.

69

Throwing one end of your rope to Denati, so that the increasingly poor visibility will not cause the two of you to get separated, you press on into the wind, looking for any sign of decent shelter from the growing storm. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **20**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **182**.

70

As soon as the ice touches your lips, it animates and squirms out of your hand, dropping down into the frozen basin. With a grinding noise, the whole block of ice that fills the basin reshapes itself into a humanoid form, which steps out of the fountain and takes a swing at you with an icy fist. You dodge the blow and draw a weapon to fight back against this bizarre enemy.

ICE SENTINEL SKILL 9 STAMINA 9

A normal sword will only do 1 STAMINA point of damage with each successful blow you strike, though you may increase it to 2 by successfully *Testing your Luck* (but will do no damage at all if you try to use LUCK and are Unlucky). If you are using the Shaman's bone club, that will do normal damage, and if you are armed with the Flame Sword, you need only hit your frozen opponent once to destroy it. If you win the fight, turn to **179**.

71

The stranger is a little taken aback at your question, but answers, "My... my name's Denati. I've travelled up from Salamonis to see Reniso, so we can discuss... certain archaeological matters of mutual interest."

His vagueness is encouraging, suggesting that he is aware of the threat posed by the Snow Witch's cultists, and thus more likely to accept that you had nothing to do with Reniso's murder. Dropping your voice a little, you ask him if he's talking about the city beneath the Crystal Caves.

His eyes light up. "Oh! So you know as well." He extends a hand to you in greeting, a carved jade ring catching the pale sunlight.

You clasp the proffered hand, and quietly tell Denati that you have some bad news for him. Warning him to prepare for a shock, you open the door wide enough to allow him in. He steps inside, and his eyes widen as he sees what has been done to the hut's owner and contents.

"I found it like this a minute ago," you explain. "Her followers must have got to him."

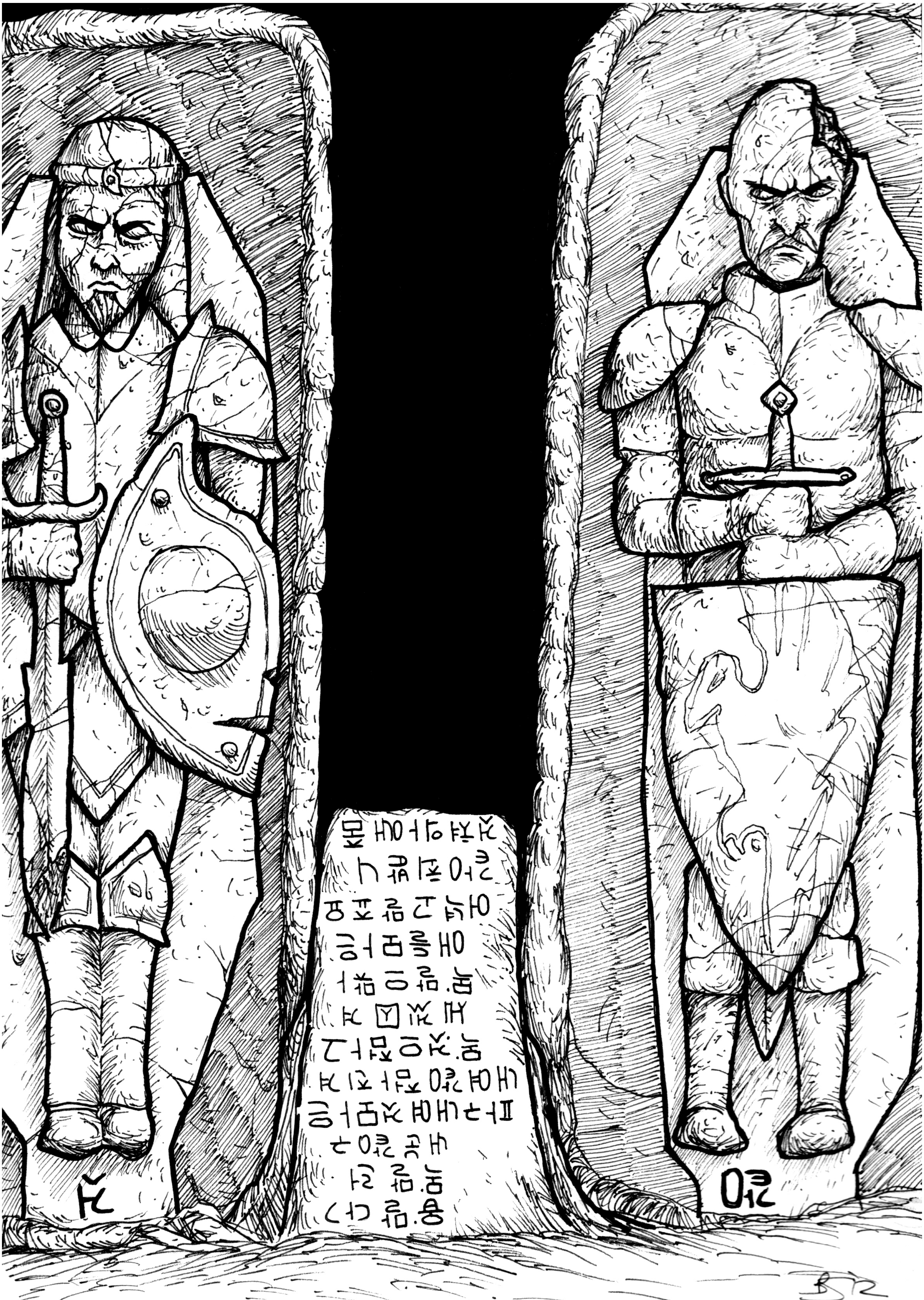
He looks around at the corpse and the surrounding debris. "Poor man. And whatever he'd found, whatever he'd learned, lost in all this carnage. These are evil days."

You tell him of the plans you and Reniso were making last night, and ask if he would be willing to accompany you to the caves.

"Mountaineering at my age?" He shakes his head, then seems to reconsider. "Oh, but to have the opportunity of seeing the city of Cyrantis myself, to set foot in the Arena of Contests..."

"And maybe bring the people who did this to justice," you add.

Abashed, he nods. "Forgive me for getting carried away. Cyrantis has been a passion of mine for many



years, and I'm afraid studying in the abstract can lead to a little too much... detachment."

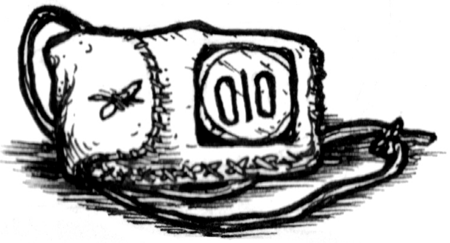
He straightens his back. "You are right. Despite the dangers, I must go. And that," he indicates the message written in blood, "holds out some hope that we might yet have time to avert disaster."

The words do not look encouraging to you, and you ask Denati what he means.

"It says, 'will return', not 'has returned'. If she hasn't yet come back, there's still the possibility that it can be averted. But we may not have a lot of time. How soon can we leave?"

You explain that you have yet to acquire suitable equipment for the expedition, and after a moment's reflection Denati opens out his cape and takes a pouch of coins from a pocket sewn into its bright green inner lining. He hands you the money, commenting, "I'm sure you have a much better idea than I of what we shall need. You can probably drive a harder bargain with the local traders, too."

Proceeding to the market, you are able to acquire two sets of winter clothing, a length of rope, two lanterns, several blankets, and enough food for seven meals for each of you. If you now wish to head off north, turn to **261**. If you would rather report Reniso's death to the village wardens before you leave, turn to **121**.



72

As you draw your weapon, the Dragon opens its jaws wide and exhales at you. Roll two dice, and if the total exceeds your current SKILL score, you must deduct 4 STAMINA points for failing to dodge the blast of freezing cold air that erupts from the Dragon's mouth. Regardless of the outcome of the roll, you then engage the Dragon in combat.

SILVER
DRAGON SKILL 15 STAMINA 22

After three Attack Rounds the Dragon pulls away from you, its nostrils flaring, and you realise that it is about to try and use its icy breath on you again. Turn to **228**.

73

Your efforts bring the rope loose, and it drops down onto you. As you gather it up, you wonder if you have been wise. While you will now be able to use the rope down here if you need to, you will also have to find an alternate means of leaving the caves once you have finished down here. You cannot reattach the rope to the rock, though, so there is no point in continuing to dwell on the subject, and you turn your attention to the contents of this cavern. Will you join Denati by the plinth (turn to **125**), or do you want to check out the bodies on the ground first (turn to **34**)?

74

The warrior notices the covetous glance you cast at her blade, and raises it in warning.

"Don't even think about taking it," she says through gritted teeth. "This was a gift from the High Priest of Glantanka. The only way you'll ever get to touch it is if I have to use it on you."

She kicks the severed head of a Toa-Suo towards you. If you are prepared to fight for the sword, despite the obvious proficiency of its owner, turn to **30**. If you would rather not raise arms against your rescuer, turn to **254**.

75

You start to reach for your weapon, but then realise that the man in front of you is just a life-sized carving on the lid of one of the coffins. You relax slightly, but remain on your guard, aware that inanimate objects can sometimes come to life and attack people.

The man depicted holds a sword and a shield, and wears some kind of armour. A symbol of Cyrantian script appears below his feet, and many more of them cover a low stone tablet to one side of the coffin. The coffin on the other side of the tablet is also carved with the image of a warrior, though his appearance and the character beneath his feet are different.

You also notice a column of Cyrantian script running down the side of each coffin lid. As far as you can tell, both of these inscriptions appear to say exactly the same thing, and you wonder if it could be a prayer for the dead, or possibly a warning not to disturb them.

"Got it!" announces Denati, and blows out his lantern. "Shall we go? Or have you found something interesting?"

You ask him what the carvings say, and he comes to your side for a look. "The ones running down the edges are numbers – all the tens and units. At the men's feet... 'Mayar'... 'Switor'? Not words I've encountered before. Given the context, they're probably the names of the men buried inside.

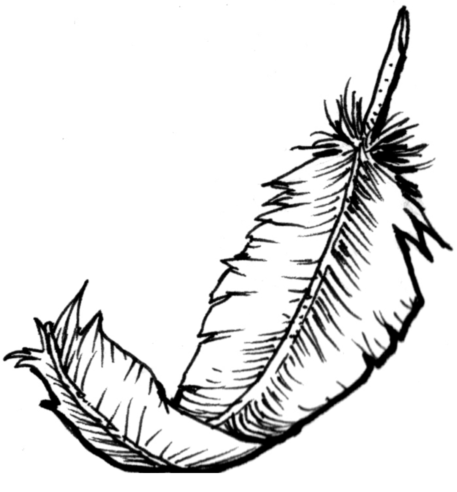
"The stone between them looks like it should tell us a lot more, though. Let me see... 'Here rests' – or 'lies' – 'the mighty champion Mayar, with his son Switor' – that might not signify an actual blood relationship: every seasoned gladiator trained a few new ones in the arts of battle, and would refer to the best pupil as a son or daughter."

You cannot help but wish that your companion could more effectively distinguish potentially useful information from facts that only hold significance for scholars like himself. Nevertheless, you keep quiet as he works his way through the translation, with muttered interjections and occasional corrections, before finally coming out with a rendition that satisfies him:

"Here rests the mighty champion Mayar,
with his son Switor,
who fought their last contest together.
On the day they died,
the sum of their years
was a hundred and forty-seven.
And the number of Mayar's years
was twice the number Switor had lived
on the day Mayar had lived as long
as Switor ever did.
Tell their years
to receive their prizes."

He laughs. "Typical Cyrantians. It's a contest. Of wits. Calculate the ages at which they died, and you can have whatever treasure was buried with them. That would be the reason for the numbers on the sarcophagi – to give an answer. And there should be some kind of reward even for getting it wrong... Though not everything the Cyrantians considered worth having would necessarily be seen as a good thing to us."

If you wish to accept the long-dead warriors' challenge, you may try to open Mayar's coffin by doubling his age and turning to the section with that number. To attempt to claim Switor's treasure, turn to the section with the same number as his age. If the first sentence of the section to which you turn does not include the name of the man whose tomb you are attempting to open, turn to **227**. If you would rather not risk finding out what 'reward' has been reserved for anyone who gets the wrong answer, you may give up on treasure-hunting and get back to the true purpose of your quest by turning to **135**.



76

Holding up your lantern, you are able to see the roof of the cavern. Fortuitously, there is a cluster of three or four icicles hanging directly above the coffin, out of your reach, but if Denati could do the trick with the ring again...

You suggest this to him, and he bites his lower lip. "It might work, but there's no way of knowing exactly where they'd hit her if they fell, and we don't know exactly how this thing works. For all we know, a non-fatal wound might even wake her up!"

Noting your displeased expression, he adds, "Besides, there are some other icicles much closer to the ground over there," and points behind you. You turn to see that he is right: the chamber's ceiling slopes downwards, and a couple of icicles dangle from it at a point little more than two metres above the floor. You hurry over to get one of them. Roll two dice. If the total is equal to or lower than your SKILL score, turn to **90**. If it is higher that your current SKILL, turn to **242**.

77

Trying your best not to appear threatening, you move forwards, your attention fixed on the next stretch of ground to ascend, watching the Stag out of the corner of your eye. Roll two dice. If the total is lower than or equal to your SKILL score, turn to **143**. If it exceeds your current SKILL, turn to **110**.

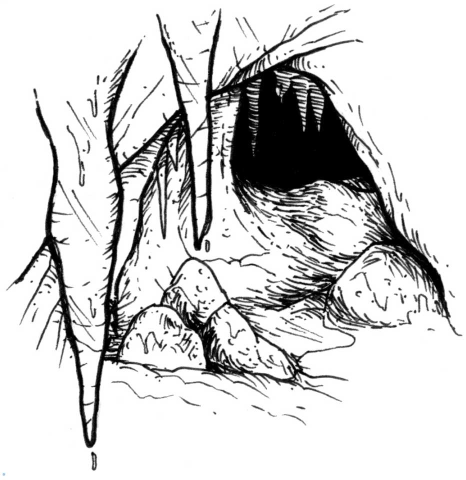
78

The force of your blow sends the Giant off balance, causing him to collide with the wall of the gorge. Dazed, he drops something metallic on the ground. Then, recovering his wits, he lunges at you with a roar, swinging his mighty fists at your head. Continue your fight against the Giant, and if you manage to defeat him, turn to **131**.

79

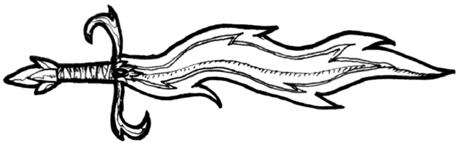
The Demon's awakening comes too late to save it. The blade of the Flame Sword pierces its chest, sinking in right up to the hilt, and the bellow of pain which erupts from the creature's mouth ruptures your eardrums. The first contortion of the beast's body in its death agonies throws you against the cave wall, and as the Demon continues to writhe, cracks open up in the ground, running up the walls and across the ceiling. Dazed and deafened, you have no opportunity to escape as the whole cavern collapses in on itself.

In one sense, your quest has been successful, as the shockwaves caused by the Demon's death throes so devastate Cyrantis that the revenant Snow Witch is buried beneath tons of rock and ice, trapped and inaccessible to her followers. However, this is not a victory you are able to celebrate, as you are crushed to death in the first few seconds of the destruction which achieves your goal for you.



80

The crack is so narrow that you must enter it sideways, removing your backpack and holding it at your side in order to have any chance of squeezing through. Even if you are prepared to do this, you are certain to suffer some grazes and abrasions as you force your way in. You will also have to hold your lantern in the other hand to see what lies ahead of you, and thus will not be able to use your sword until you reach a wider space. If you are determined to try and get through the crack, or have no choice because the cave entrance is blocked, deduct 2 STAMINA points for the scrapes you incur and turn to **258**. If you can still leave by the way you came in, and do not want to risk getting stuck in what may turn out to be a dead end, you can return to the entrance by turning to **36**.



81

You do not react quickly enough, and the key drops past your hand before your fingers can close around it, landing in the recess in the top of the shrine and shattering into hundreds of tiny pieces. These then vanish from view, along with the die. You have failed the test, but your very willingness to try has earned you a lesser reward: on one occasion before the end of this adventure, when required to roll dice (even in combat, though still only for one roll), you may choose the outcome rather than actually throwing the dice. If at any point you throw the dice and get an unfavourable result, you may not use this boon to alter the number rolled: this is strictly to be used instead of the dice.

If you have an iron key and want to see if it fits the lock in the side of the shrine, turn to **240**. Otherwise, you leave the shrine and proceed along the passageway (turn to **17**).

82

As you make your way through the Chamber of the Four Winds, you will have to keep track of forward movement and transverse movement (left and right). Calculating where you are at any time should not be difficult as long as you keep an accurate record of all your moves. To find your transverse position, count the total number of metres you have moved left, and the number of metres you have moved right. If they are equal, you are on the central path. Otherwise, subtract the lower number from the higher to establish how far off-centre you are. For example, if you had moved a total of three metres to the left and five metres to the right, you would be two metres right of centre. To move, roll one die and refer to the table below.

1: The winds subside for a short time, allowing you to make a little unimpeded progress towards the exit. Roll one die and advance that many metres.
2: A powerful headwind slows your progress, making every step a struggle. Roll one die, halve the number rolled (rounding fractions up) and advance that many metres.
3: A strong breeze from your right drives you almost imperceptibly to your left as you struggle onwards across the cavern floor. Roll one die and advance that many metres, but also move one metre to the left.
4: A mighty draught behind you propels you forward, and you must take care not to stumble. Roll one die, add two, and advance that many metres.
5: Blasts of wind from your left drive you to the right even as you press on across the floor of the cavern. Roll one die and advance that many metres, but also move one metre to the right.
6: Turn to **234**.

If you have now advanced at least 25 metres across the chamber, turn to **172**. If not, but transverse movement has taken you three metres away from the central path, turn to **201** if you are on the left, and to **39** if you are on the right. If none of these apply, roll and consult the table again.

83

You and your companions halt at the foot of the rock face you must climb. As you gaze up at it, you wish that you had been able to acquire some proper climbing equipment, or even just a longer rope, before you set off. As it is, the best way to ascend at a reasonable speed while maintaining some degree of safety is a tiresome and repetitive process. Once one end of the rope has been attached to you, and the other to Nowri, one of you climbs as far as possible (you take it in turns to lead the way) and finds a secure position. The other then follows and, once both of you have a stable footing, one must undo the rope and drop it to Denati, who then ties it around himself and, with much assistance from the two of you, makes the ascent. After the fourth time, he ruefully observes that it would probably have been quicker to just make the detour, but you can see that climbing back down again would be too risky and time-consuming, and insist on continuing to go up.
A little further on, the situation improves a little, as you reach a broad ledge which slopes upwards and curves around the side of the peak. Roll one die to see who takes the lead at this point. If you roll an odd number, turn to **11**. If the number you roll is even, turn to **142**.

84

Crouching as low as you can while still keeping an eye on the Toa-Suo and the Wolves, you settle down for what could be a long wait. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **19**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **264**.

85

Around a hundred metres further up, pain lances through your ankle and you stumble, falling flat on your face. You try to get up, and the agonising sensation is repeated. Turning your head to look at the source of the pain, you see that you have stepped into a trapper's snare, and a loop of wire is biting into your ankle. Now that you know what has happened, it is easy enough to cut the loop and extricate yourself from the trap, but the injury will hamper your movement. Lose 3 STAMINA points and 1 SKILL point. Keeping a look out for further snares, you limp on up the mountain. Turn to **210**.

86

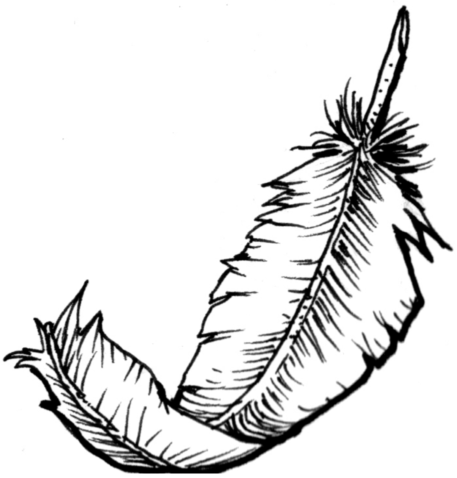
You find a narrow gap in the ice at one point, and work the tip of your finger into it, hoping to widen the crack and eventually break the bracelet free from the wrist it encircles. Instead, you bend your fingernail too far back, tearing the flesh of your finger where nail meets skin. While this is a very minor injury, it is exceedingly painful, and will make it difficult for you to handle items. Lose 1 STAMINA point and 1 SKILL point.

Concluding that you would have done better to leave these dead alone, you move away from the corpses. If you have already taken a look at the plinth with Denati, turn to **9**. If you want to do so now, turn to **125**. If you would rather investigate the nearby tunnel entrance, turn to **47**.

87

The sun is sinking low in the sky, but you want to put a lot of distance between yourself and the Dragon's cave, so you press onwards until the decreasing visibility makes it too dangerous to go any further. Spotting a slight hollow in the ground that will provide a little cover, you make camp for the night there. If you have not yet eaten today, you must do so now, and may restore up to 4 STAMINA points if the events of the past couple of days have left you at less than full health. If you ate earlier, you are free to eat again, should your recent tribulations have done you more harm than could be made up for by just the previous meal.

You and Denati take it in turns to keep watch while the other sleeps. The night passes without incident, though the Dragon does join the host of horrors which torment you in your dreams. Turn to **4**.



88

Evading your attack, the traitor brings his ring to his lips and blows into it. He is too intent on doing this to defend himself any more, and you strike him down where he stands. Behind you, you hear a sound that is all too familiar from your crossing the Chamber of the Four Winds: an icicle breaking loose from the ceiling. Acting on impulse, you spin round and throw yourself in the direction of the coffin, desperately hoping to deflect the falling icicle before it can hit its target. *Test your Luck* twice. If you are Lucky both times, turn to **24**. If you are only Lucky once, turn to **108**. If you are Unlucky both times, turn to **188**.

89

Somehow you manage to maintain your balance and stay upright, and even to keep hold of your lantern, as you begin to slither down the slope. Nevertheless, you can do nothing to arrest your slide, and feel a growing sense of alarm as you accelerate onwards, only able to see a short distance ahead of yourself. By the time you see the ground levelling out at the bottom of the slope, you are practically there, and have no opportunity to prepare yourself for the imminent stop. Luck remains with you, though, and while the transition to a flat surface is a little jarring, you merely totter forward a few paces before regaining control. Even so, you steady yourself against a wall to catch your breath. Turn to **246**.

90

It is not enough just to be able to reach an icicle: you must find one that is long and strong enough to destroy the cold heart of the evil being at repose in the ice coffin, and get a grip sufficiently close to its base that you can break the whole thing off rather than just snapping it in two. This takes a couple of attempts, but at last you have the weapon you need. Aware that it will melt if you hold on to it for too long, you hasten back to the coffin to use it.

While you have been fetching an icicle, Denati has raised the lid of the coffin, which is held in place by intricately carved hinges of ice on one side. He steps back to give you access to its contents. You raise the icicle, and then stab down towards the Snow Witch's heart. Turn to **230**.

91

The inside of the dish splits open along the dividing lines, each segment dropping down a couple of centimetres to create a hole in the middle, through which the die drops. They then come back up again, fusing together so seamlessly that no trace of the lines remains, and leaving you with nothing.

Almost nothing. Your willingness to take a chance here has earned you a minor reward. At a point of your choice, when required to throw the dice (including combat), you may choose not to use the dice, but pick whatever outcome to that single roll you want. This boon cannot be used to change the result of a roll which did not go as you wanted it to: only to take the place of a roll that has not been made.

Unless you have an iron key and want to see if it fits the hole in the side of the shrine (in which case turn to **240**), you have finished here, and should carry on along the passageway. Turn to **17**.

92

Up close, you can see that the object protruding from Reniso's mouth is the corner of a piece of paper. If you would rather not investigate further, leave by turning immediately to **204**. Otherwise, you take hold of the paper, but meet with resistance. With a quiet plea to his spirit to forgive you, you force your forefinger and thumb between his cold lips to pry his jaws far enough apart and, with a shudder, extract the balled-up piece of paper from his mouth.

Somebody knocks on the front door. Startled, you step backwards, stuffing the ball of paper into your pocket. You may take a look at it when you are given the opportunity to eat. To do so, note down the number of the section you are on at the time, and turn to **156**.

There is a second knock at the door, and an unfamiliar voice calls out, "Hello? Is there anybody in there?" It flashes into your mind that the door is not locked. If whoever is outside should try it, and see you standing in front of Reniso's body, the situation could become awkward. Trying to compose yourself, you walk up to the door and open it a little – not enough that the corpse would be visible from outside.

Standing on the doorstep is an elderly stranger in a purple cloak. "Reniso?" he asks, but before you can think of what to answer, he continues, "No, surely not. Too young. But this is his house, isn't it? I followed the warden's directions quite precisely." You cannot let the stranger in, or he will see the body, and might think you had something to do with it. But if you turn him away, he's bound to get sent back here and find it anyway, and then he'll give your description to the village warders and you'll be in even more trouble. To give yourself time to think of what to do next, you ask the man who he is. Turn to **71**.

93

"No other lowlanders. Only you." The Barbarian evidently has no interest in conversation as, having answered your question, he strides away. Hoping that his words mean you are ahead of the Snow Witch's followers, you continue your ascent. Turn to **210**.

94

You are distracted by a loud grunting sound from some way behind you, and the Barbarian takes advantage of this to get in another blow (lose 2 STAMINA points). Continue the battle and if, against the odds, you manage to defeat your enemy, turn to **236**.

95

For several minutes you race along the side of the dune, but then a cry from behind you catches your attention. Denati is stumbling onwards, gasping for breath, clearly unable to run much further. Aware that without his guidance you will have little chance of discovering the secrets of the lost city you seek, and also spotting that only one of the Wolves has appreciably closed the distance between you and the rest of the pack, you yell at your companion to keep going, then draw your sword. According to the trappers, the Toa-Suo will eat any kind of flesh, so if you can kill this fastest of your pursuers, its corpse might distract a few of the others. You swing your blade at the lead Wolf as it leaps towards you.

SNOW WOLF SKILL 7 STAMINA 8

If you kill the Snow Wolf in five Attack Rounds or fewer, turn to **138**. If you are still fighting after the fifth Round, turn immediately to **202**.

96

As the flame-shaped blade makes contact with the insubstantial body of your foe, the Phantom vanishes in a blaze of fiery light. The sword channels some of this burst of energy into your body, invigorating you: you may restore either your SKILL, STAMINA or LUCK to its *Initial* level.

Now that the danger has passed, Denati gets up and somewhat shamefacedly moves back to your side. "Sorry to leave you like that, but at my age, one touch from that thing might have stopped my heart. And it was your mistake that set it on us in the first place..." Looking down at the lid of the stone coffin, he continues, "No second chance at the puzzle, either."

Following his gaze, you see that the carvings have vanished from the edges of the stone slabs which seal the two sarcophagi. Deciding not to push your luck further by interfering with any more of the tombs, you start to move through the Hall. Turn to **135**.

97

Observing your intent to brave the dangers of the cavern, Denati takes out the stone flask again and gulps down a mouthful of the potent liquor it holds. "A little something to steady the nerves," he explains, and offers you the flask. If you drink from it, add 2 STAMINA points.

He then reseals the flask and returns it to his pocket. "All right, then. Let's go."

Turn to **140**.

98

A narrow opening in the rock wall to your right, about a metre above your head, offers a slim hope of shelter if mounds of snow should come sweeping through the defile, but getting up there will not be easy. Denati catches up to you and catches sight of your concerned expression. "Is there something wrong?"

"Don't you feel the shaking?" you ask. Surely he must do, for it is growing in intensity.

"Now you come to mention it... What's that noise?"

You hear it too, a pounding sound, in time with the tremors. They must be connected somehow.
Then the explanation looms up at the far end of the defile. A Frost Giant is running down the slope, the ground shaking with each heavy footfall. He bellows incoherently upon catching sight of you. Will you attempt to get out of his way (turn to **214**) or draw your sword and stand your ground (turn to **16**)?

99

As the Orc slumps to the ground, you tear the axe from its slackened fingers and repeatedly hack at the collar around its neck, intent on smashing this symbol of all that you had to suffer. Your blows strike the ground or the head or torso of the Orc at least as often as the actual collar, and eventually you slump to your knees, too worn out to carry on. The blunted axe slips from your fingers to the floor.

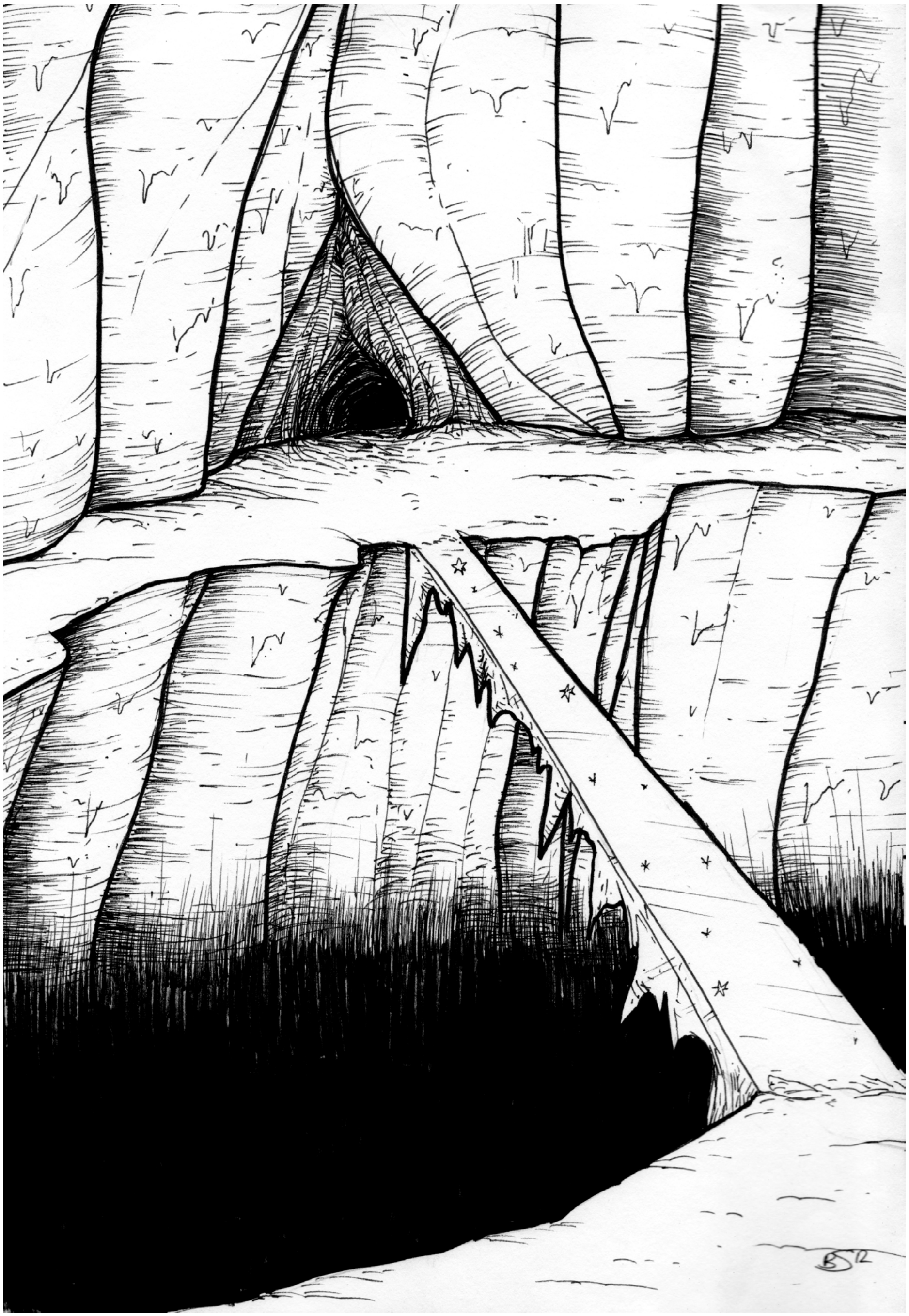
So great is your fatigue that you barely react to a touch on your shoulder. As if from far away, you hear Denati's voice: "I think I can keep watch for the rest of the night. You should get some rest."

Shambling like the Orc did, you trudge across to your bedding, and collapse onto it. Sleep will not come, and you huddle beneath the blankets in fearful anticipation of what else the night might bring. Lose 2 points of STAMINA and turn to **220**.

100

You can make out a faint gleam of light at the end of the passage, and press on towards it. As you draw closer, and see what lies ahead of you, your pace slows.

A hole in the roof of the cavern ahead – if it can be called a cavern – allows enough daylight through that you can see as far as the tunnel entrance in the far wall. However, this light does not penetrate to the bottom of the fissure that gapes before you, stretching as far as you can see to either side. A narrow bridge appears to be the only way across, and not a remotely safe one, by the look of it. For starters, it has no sides, no handrails, nothing whatsoever to prevent its users from falling off if they should misstep. Or even just slip, for the other alarmingly distinctive thing about it is that it is made of ice. Thick enough that you have few doubts about its structural integrity, but that does not make the thought of crossing it any less alarming. If you have a pair of Dragonskin boots, turn to **44**. If not, but you still have your rope, turn to **66**. If you have neither, turn to **164**.



101

Leaping down on you from above gives the Leopard enough of an advantage that you cannot fend off its first attack (lose 2 STAMINA points). After that, you fight on more even terms.

SNOW
LEOPARD SKILL 8 STAMINA 11

If you win, continue up the mountain by turning to **210**.

102

Denati suggests that the bodies could be victims of the Dragon you found at the end of the other passage. You concede the possibility, and note that if so, there must be another way into its cave from here, as there is no way such a large creature could have brought them along the tunnel you used. Still, the Dragon is likely to have its attention focused on the opening to the south, where it last saw you, so this route offers a better chance of getting past the beast unnoticed. Warning your companion to keep quiet and tread carefully, you move to one side, not wanting to walk straight under the dead men, and slowly move forwards. Before long the light of your lantern reveals that this cave does indeed open out into the larger cavern, and by straining your eyes you can just make out the flank of the Dragon, which is indeed facing away from you. Turn to **65**.

103

Unpleasant though the prospect of getting any closer to the quiescent Demon is, the wisest course of action now is to try and find out if there are any other exits from the beast's cave. The monster's bulk prevents you from seeing the far side, so you will have to get past the Demon in order to see if there is a way on beyond it. To your left, a strip of floor a little under a metre wide passes straight in front of the creature. On the right, a much narrower space leads behind the brute's back, and you would have to hug the wall tightly to keep from making contact with the Demon's vile flesh. If you want to go left, turn to **55**. If you would rather go right, turn to **177**.

104

You try to get up again, but the cold has sapped your strength, and you find yourself unable to do more than slump on the floor. Something red fills your vision, and with difficulty you raise your head to see the Snow Witch standing over you. A momentary surge of fear and hatred provokes you into attempting to struggle to your feet once more, but then despair washes over you and you sag to the ground again.

A taloned hand grips your shoulder, a numbing cold radiating out from it, and you are hauled upright to receive a kiss that freezes the blood within your veins and turns your heart to a block of ice. You have become the first recruit in the army of Ice Ghouls with which the Snow Witch intends to bring the whole of Titan under her control.

105

You lead the way up the steps, and just before you get to the curve at the half-way point, you feel a sharp pain in your leg, which causes you to cry out. Lose 3 STAMINA points. Denati asks what just happened, and you explain.

"Oh dear!" he says. "I think you might have just resolved a dispute that's been going on among scholars for decades."

You ask him what he means. He tells you, "It concerns a legend of one of Cyrantis' mightiest gladiators. The details of all the contests he won aren't relevant here – the significant thing is the account of his death, 'on the stairs of hurting and healing'. Nobody knew exactly what that meant, but one of the less popular theories is that it referred to an actual flight of steps, which would randomly emit bursts of energy, occasionally beneficial, more often harmful, when trodden on. It appears that that might be correct after all."

Your heart sinks a little as you regard the steps ahead of you, and the ones you have already climbed. Stepping on any one of them could mean more pain, but short of jumping off – which could lead to injury anyway at this height – you have no choice but to use some of them. If you decide to take your chances with the stairs, turn to **208**. If you would rather jump, *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **48**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **267**.

106

You have misjudged your jump, and do not quite clear the crevasse, your lower torso slamming into the edge on the far side. Lose 2 STAMINA points. You grab desperately for a handhold, while your feet scrabble against the icy wall in search of purchase. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **244**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **52**.

107

As the Owl plummets to the ground so far below, you look down, hoping that somehow Nowri might have survived the fall, but the sight of her broken body sprawled across the rocks at the foot of the peak tells you that her adventuring days are over.

You become aware of Denati's presence at your side. "She should have waited for the rope," he quavers, blinking back tears.

You sway, and the scholar clutches at your arm. "Not you, too. Sit down, wait for your head to clear."

Recognising the wisdom of his words, you slump down into a seated position, continuing to stare down at the distant corpse.

Denati sits beside you and, after a few minutes, speaks up again. "I don't wish to seem heartless, but we must go on. She wouldn't want us to fail in our mission just because she died."

You nod, and get to your feet, reaching down to help the old man up. He hesitates, reaching for one of the feathers strewn about the ledge in the aftermath of the fight.

"As I recall, these are considered powerful totems by some of the Barbarian tribes that live in the mountains. We should take a few with us in case we run into anybody from those tribes."

It amazes you that he could think of such things at a time like this, but you say nothing, quietly accepting the feather he passes you and tucking it behind your ear as he instructs (do not forget to record the feather on your *Adventure Sheet*). Denati helps himself to several more feathers before rising. If, inspired by his pragmatism, you want to try climbing down to take Nowri's magic sword for yourself before moving on, turn to **229**. If you would rather leave it with its owner, continue along the ledge by turning to **40**.

108

You are a fraction of a second too quick, and instead of knocking the falling icicle out of the way, you get in its way, the point sinking deeply into your back. Your momentum continues to carry you forward, and your flinching at the first stab of pain turns your leap into an awkward somersault, causing you to land heavily on your back, forcing the icicle in so deep that its bloodied tip erupts from your chest. As the life ebbs from your body, you tilt your head back until you can see the coffin behind you. Its occupant sleeps on, and will continue to do so, perhaps forever, unless some other minion of the Snow Witch manages to get to here and unlock its secrets. But for now, her plans have been thwarted, and a faint sense of satisfaction dulls the pain of your final moments.

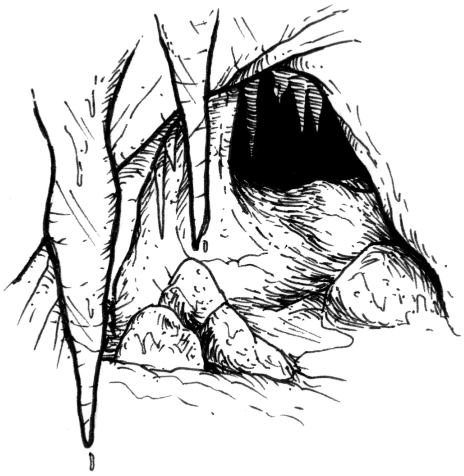
109

Denati is crouched beside the dead Barbarian Shaman, apparently unaware of what has happened to block off the exit from the cave.

"This is interesting," he tells you, handing you a slim leather pouch on a cord. A hole cut into one side reveals it to contain a disc of metal with symbols inscribed on it. "He had it around his neck. I think it's one of the gambling tokens they used in Cyrantis. You know, I think this cave could be connected with the ruins of the city. That big crack at the back looks as if it might lead somewhere..."

You tell him that you will have to investigate the crack, as it may now be the only way out. Your announcement does not seem to perturb him, as he is so excited at the prospect of finding a way into the city that has obsessed him for so long.

You may eat Provisions before turning your attention to the crack, and can take the Shaman's bone club as a back-up weapon if you wish. When you are ready to move on, turn to **80**.



110

Abruptly the Stag charges at you, its hooves kicking up powdered snow as it gallops across the ground towards you. Realising that it could do you a lot of harm if it hits you, you try to dodge out of its way. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **239**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **12**.

111

The die rattles around inside the bowl-like cavity, and as it comes to rest, a soft chime sounds overhead. You look up to see a shining key made of crystal or ice, hanging in the air a couple of metres above the shrine. The glow of the key fades, and suddenly whatever force was suspending the key in mid-air ceases to hold it there, causing it to fall. Instinctively, you attempt to catch it. Roll two dice. If the total is lower than or equal to your SKILL score, turn to **196**. If it exceeds your current SKILL, turn to **81**.

112

The light from your lantern only illuminates a small area of the cavern, and your eyes strain to pierce the surrounding darkness for any sign of danger. A sense of oppression grows within you, and it takes you a while to realise why: your ears are becoming sensitised to the sounds of the Crystal Caves, which are stirring up memories of your imprisonment in them all those years ago. You attempt to focus your mind on the here and now, where you are not a helpless slave but a righteous avenger, determined to ensure that your former oppressor never gets the opportunity to repeat her atrocities. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **137**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **59**.

113

You can now see the way out of the chamber, and estimate that one more sprint should suffice to get you and Denati to safety. As you watch the current feather rising and falling on the currents of air, you are a little surprised to see what appears to be a kite impaled on a fat icicle hanging from the cavern roof a short distance to your left.

Roll the die again. If you roll 1~5, turn to **265**. If you roll 6, turn to **10**, but note down the number of this section and return here, not to **216**, afterwards.

114

You lash out at one of the skeletons, which collapses to the floor in a heap of bone and metal. The other one falls upon you, but then just slumps against your shoulder, immobile, and it is the work of only a moment to throw it off.

As you catch your breath, Denati quietly asks if you realise what just happened. You speculate that the spell used to animate the skeletons was miscast, and he chuckles. "I think the explanation is rather more mundane, actually. You didn't spot the wire connecting them, and I didn't have time to say anything before you blundered into it and dragged them on top of yourself."

A quick examination of the fallen bones confirms your companion's version of events. Embarrassed at having fallen for such a crude trick, you move on down the passage, now on the alert for further tripwires and other traps. Turn to **15**.

115

The Giant barrels into you, knocking you flat on your back, and a massive heel comes down on one of your shoulders as the huge brute rushes onwards, not breaking his step for a moment. Roll one die, add 1 to the number rolled, and deduct that many STAMINA points. If you rolled an even number, your sword arm was trodden on, and you must deduct two SKILL points; otherwise, the damage done is less serious, and you only lose one point of SKILL.

Denati managed to avoid the Giant by pressing himself against the wall of the defile. He now rushes over to help you up. As you get to your feet, you make the alarming realisation that, though the Giant is moving further away with every passing second, the trembling of the ground continues to grow in intensity. Turn to **272**.

116

A cloud passes over the sun as you take the sword from the lifeless hands of its former owner, and you are stricken with a profound sense of guilt. Your reasons for desiring the sword may well have been good, but you were wrong to repay your rescuer in this manner. Lose 3 points of LUCK.

Nevertheless, the Flame Sword is now yours. Whenever you use it in battle, you may add 2 to your Attack Strength, and it will do 3 points of damage with each blow, unless otherwise specified. This damage can be increased to 5 by successfully *Testing your Luck*, but an Unlucky roll will reduce the damage to 2.

Denati joins you beside the corpse and shakes his head in disapproval. "You shouldn't have done that." He crouches down, grabs the body by the feet, and starts to drag it towards the crevasse. "We don't have time to bury her properly, but she deserves better than to be left for the scavengers."

You take hold of the woman's wrists and assist Denati in giving her a half-decent disposal.

The two of you then continue on your way in silence. Night falls with unexpected rapidity, and you do not have time to find an ideal spot to make camp, but must make the best of where you are when visibility becomes too poor for you to go any further.

You must now eat a meal. In the highly likely event that you lost STAMINA earlier in the day, the food you consume will restore 4 points.

You take the first watch during the

night, waking Denati some hours later so you can get some rest. Roll one die. If you roll 1 or 2, an icy breeze keeps you from getting any sleep (lose 2 STAMINA points). Regardless, no predators trouble you during the hours of darkness. Turn to 4.

117

You get a good grip on the lip of the cave mouth, and are able to pull yourself the rest of the way up with ease.

Unexpectedly, a fire is alight further in, its light showing you that the narrow opening only extends for a few metres before widening out considerably. You squeeze through the short distance remaining between you and the more spacious interior, and then freeze, alarmed at the sight that meets your eyes within. Turn to **50**.

118

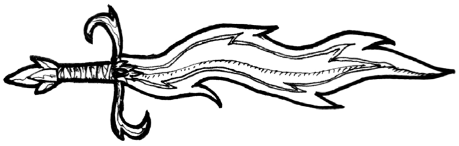
Roll one die, adding one to the number rolled if you offered food. If you get 1 or 2, the spirit watching over the shrine is offended at being approached by an outsider, and curses you (lose 1 LUCK point). If you get 3 or 4, nothing happens. If you get 5 or above, your offering is accepted, and you gain 2 points of LUCK.

Regardless of the outcome, you continue on up the mountain. Turn to **210**.

119

You have lost 4 STAMINA points. Struggling to your feet, you lurch towards the coffin, only to stop dead in horror as you see what you had most feared. The Snow Witch is starting to move, sitting up, grinning even more malignantly than in the worst of your nightmares.

She looks down at the huddled body of her servant sprawled on the cavern floor, then unhurriedly turns her head to regard you. “You killed him? It does not matter. He served his purpose.”



Disgust at her callousness enables you to shake off the stupefaction. Your weapon is still in your hand. You raise it and lunge at your oldest and worst enemy. If you are using the Flame Sword, turn to **18**. If not, turn to **217**.

120

Your blanket rope arrests your fall, but you only have a split second to celebrate your survival before hitting the wall of the crevasse. An arduous climb back up to solid ground follows, and you lose 5 STAMINA points from the impact and subsequent ordeal. Assuming you survive to make it to safety, you manage to cross the bridge without incident on your second attempt.

Once you are safe on the other side, you undo the rope so that Denati can use it, and while the crossing is obviously a harrowing experience for him, he completes it without coming to grief. As soon as has pulled himself together sufficiently to continue, the two of you set off down the passage towards your goal. Turn to **175**.

121

The wardens question you for hours, trying to get you to confess to having killed Reniso. Their ‘evidence’ consists of little more than the fact that you were in his hut today, and were seen spending a large sum of money at the market, but it does make you the best suspect available.

Reasoning that his murder shows that the Snow Witch’s followers were already aware of his plans, you see little point in continuing to keep quiet about such matters and explain what must have happened, but the wardens are not easily convinced and, frustrated at your refusal to tell them what they want to hear, throw you into a flea-infested cell while they continue their investigations. Lose 2 STAMINA points for the bites.

Towards nightfall you are begrudgingly released. Stef has confirmed your whereabouts during the morning, and the fact that a man of learning from as renowned a city as Salamonis claims to have given you the money undermines the wardens’ assertion that you stole it from Reniso, so they have little choice but to accept your admission of innocence.

It would be too dangerous to embark on your quest this late on in the day, so you postpone your departure until tomorrow, hoping that this delay will not cost you your chance to thwart the Snow Witch and her servants. After a perfunctory meal (do not deduct any Provisions, but restore no STAMINA either) you turn in for the night. Turn to **51**.

122

You have prevented this servant of the Snow Witch from awakening her, but there are probably others still out there somewhere, and he may even have told some of them everything he knew about this place, or left notes that would enable them to rediscover the secret. You return to the coffin, determined to ensure that nobody else ever gets the opportunity to revive its monstrous occupant. If you have the Flame Sword, turn to **224**. If you do not possess this item, turn to **67**.

123

You strike a decisive blow against the skeletal hybrid, which collapses into an untidy heap of bone, leaving a small globe of white light hovering in the air in front of you. Before you can react, the gleaming sphere darts forwards, impacting on your chest and bursting in a shower of glistening particles. A sense of well-being floods through you, and you may restore either STAMINA points equal to half your *Initial* score, or 2 LUCK points, or 1 point of SKILL.

You turn to Denati to ask if he knows what has just happened, and see that he is gaping at you in amazement. “The Victor’s Boon!” he mutters in hushed tones. Observing your confused expression, he adds, “The god the Cyrantians honoured here was said to directly reward the winners of gladiatorial battles which particularly pleased him. That fight must have been a rare treat for him, after this place has been abandoned for so long.”

He dusts sand from his knees, and continues, “We should be able to leave the Arena without any more trouble, now.”

Relieved to hear this, you head for the damaged gates. Turn to **13**.

124

The passage you have discovered twists and winds, eventually splitting into two. A slight breeze issues from one of the turnings and, checking your compass, you find that that way leads back south. The other way goes roughly north-east. If you would rather head into the wind, even though that leads the opposite way to your ultimate goal, turn to **243**. If you prefer to stick with the more direct route, despite the lack of any indications that it leads outside again, turn to **7**.

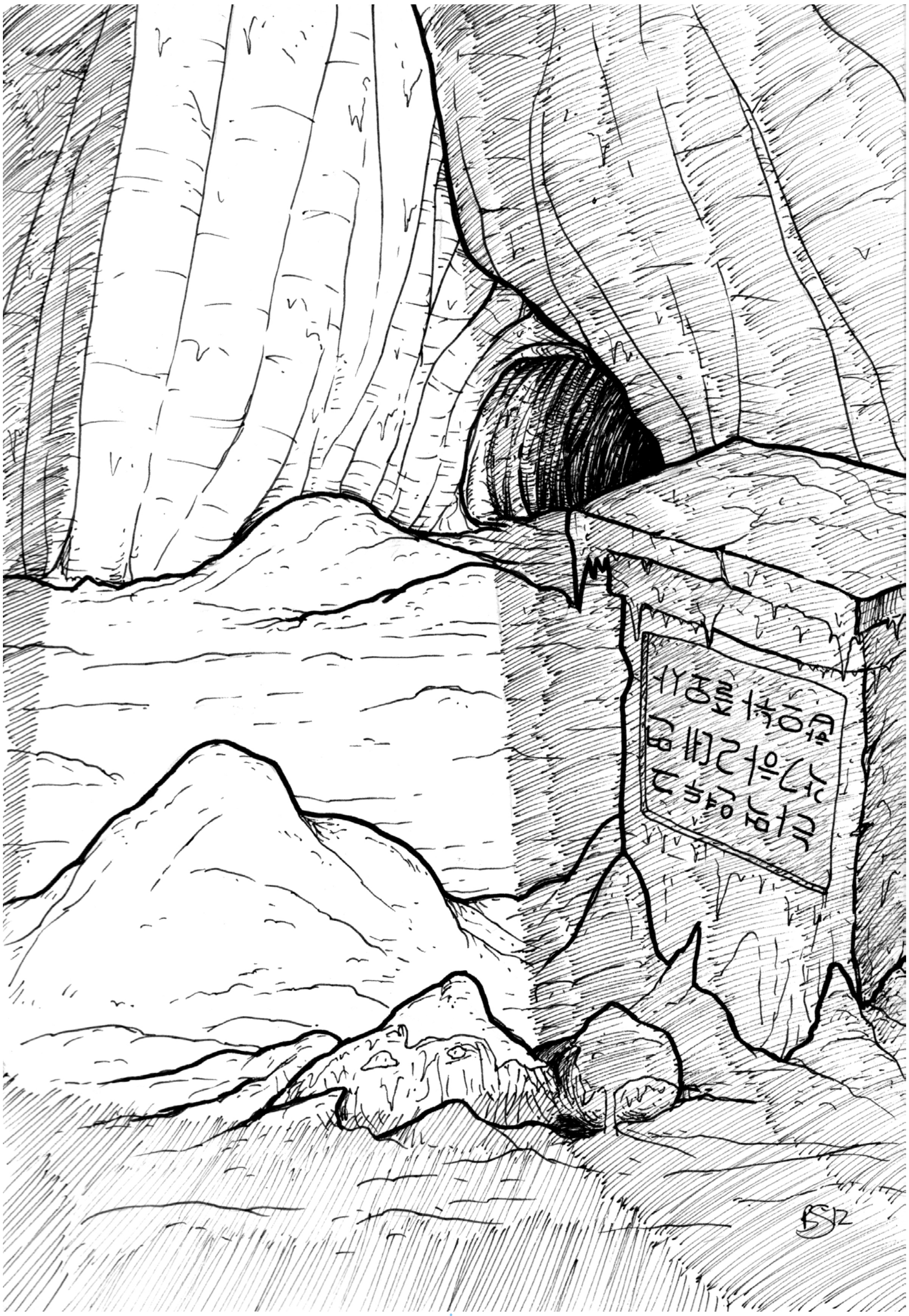
125

Where Denati has rubbed away snow, you can see that the plinth has been carved out of ice, and it bears an inscription in unfamiliar characters.

“It’s Cyrantian script,” he tells you in an awed whisper. “Preserved for centuries by ancient sorcery.”

You ask him what it says, and he haltingly translates: “A one who... no, that doesn’t make sense...” He blows away snow from the edge of the inscription. “Ah yes, the one who seeks the path... no, that’s a plural... paths of... now, that symbol can signify wisdom or power...”

After a couple of minutes of muttering and correcting himself, he has a translation with which he is satisfied: “’The one who seeks the paths of power must wait for the sun to rise, and it shall show the way.’ Well, the ‘paths of power’ sound to me like what we want, so,” he raises his eyes from the plinth and casts an uneasy glance around the chamber, “I suppose we are going to have to stay here until the sun comes up tomorrow.”

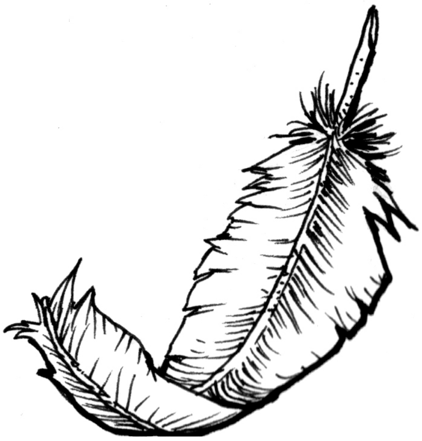


A glance up through the hole in the roof reveals that the sky is already starting to turn dark, so you decide that you might as well make camp here for the night. It worries you that, if Denati had not been with you, you would not have been able to make sense of the inscription and learn what to do here. If anything should happen to deprive you of his knowledge, you would have little chance of completing your quest.

Still, worrying about something that may never happen is not the most productive thing you can do right now. If you have not yet examined the bodies on the floor, and wish to do so, turn to **34**. If you have already checked them out, or would rather leave them alone, turn to **9**.

126

Your last blow would have felled any ordinary man, but somehow the



Barbarian remains upright. With a frenzied roar he hurls himself at you, and you are only just able to dodge his last attack. Unable to check his rush, he goes over the edge of the rock wall you climbed to get here. From where you are, you can clearly see him plummet to the ground below, and the already slim likelihood of his surviving the fall is further reduced as he bounces over another edge and disappears from view. With a shudder, you turn away.

"They're a dangerously unpredictable lot," Denati observes. "Let's be on our way before any more turn up and get aggressive."

Returning your attention to the climb ahead of you, you take his advice. Turn to **210**.

127

The flat of your blade slams into the Toa-Suo's chest as the brute's hind paws hit the ground. The force of your blow throws the creature off balance, causing it to topple backwards. In the moment before the Toa-Suo disappears into the gaping crevasse behind it, you see sheer terror in its eyes, and realise that this was no mere animal, but an intelligent being. Nevertheless, it was trying to kill you, and your having slain it in self-defence is not likely to make your nights any more troubled than they already are. Turn to **192**.

128

You step over the fragments of one of the icicles brought down by Denati's ring. Add 1 LUCK point. Return to **82** and roll on the table again, but if you get another six, disregard it and roll again. You may reroll as many sixes as the number you noted down when Denati used the ring. Of course, if you have the misfortune to use up all your rerolls, you will have to turn to the section specified on the table the next time you roll a six.

129

You move around the edge of the cave until you stand directly in front of the Demon, then draw the sword. The sound of running footsteps tells you that Denati has decided to take his chances with the slippery slope rather than wait and see what happens here, but he will not be able to get far, and you are sure that you will be able to persuade him to rejoin you once the Demon is dead.

Grasping the hilt in both hands, you raise the sword above your head and aim its tip at where you estimate the monster's heart – or whatever it has in place of a heart – to be. One forceful blow should do the job.

The Demon's eyes flick open, radiating malice, and you strike, hoping to get in a killing blow before it can react.

DEMON SKILL 14 STAMINA 20

You must fight one round of combat against the beast. If you manage to land a blow on your opponent, turn to **79**. If you do not win the first Attack Round, turn to **27**.

130

The side of the shrine swings open to reveal a hollow interior, which contains a bronze helmet of unusual design. The faceplate is made of clear crystal.

Curious, you try the helmet on, and find it to be a perfect fit. The crystal very slightly distorts your view of what is in front of you, but after just a few seconds your vision seems to return to normal. As far as you can tell, the helmet neither improves nor impairs your capabilities, but it does at least provide additional protection for your head. Decide whether or not you wish to keep it on, and then leave the shrine by turning to **17**.

131

The impact of the Giant's corpse hitting the ground shakes some snow loose from the walls of the defile, but this has no serious consequences. Remembering the item that the Giant dropped, you dig around in the snow at the foot of the wall, finding a large iron key, which you slip into your pocket.

As the pounding of your heart subsides, you become aware that the shaking of the ground has not ceased, though the Giant who caused it is no longer moving. Unless...

A second Frost Giant appears at the upper end of the gorge, stopping abruptly as he catches sight of the massive corpse at your feet. He braces himself against both walls as yet another Giant catches up with him.

Turning to his companion, the second Giant exclaims, "They killed Ushall!"

"Kill them!" roars the other.

The Giant in front clenches both fists and lets out a guttural roar. Turn to **260**.

132

Though the opening into the passageway is not as high up as the one leading to the cave where you encountered the Barbarian Shaman, the ice which originally brought you to grief makes this ascent a lot more difficult, and you wind up falling back again. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **266**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **154**.

133

You are transfixed by the Snow Witch's gaze and dimly perceive that your fingers are loosening their hold on the hilt of the Flame Sword, which clatters to the ground at your feet. You drop to your knees, head tilting up to maintain eye contact with the blazing orbs that have taken complete control of your will. Their owner takes your head in both hands, and a piercing cold lances through your brain, then penetrates through the rest of your body, instantaneously freezing it and turning you into an Ice Ghoul, the first member of the army she means to raise against the rest of the world.

134

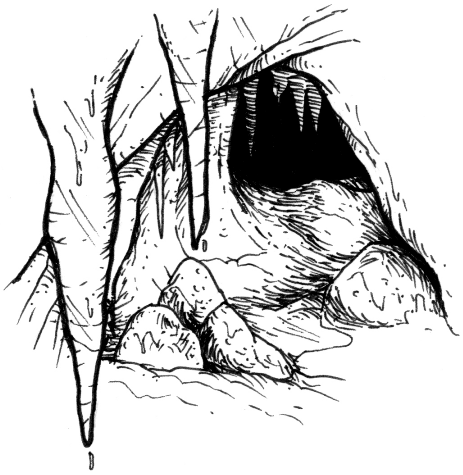
Up until now, the weather conditions have been quite favourable. However, towards midday, dark clouds fill the sky, and snow begins to fall. The wind picks up as well, and you realise that you risk getting caught in a blizzard. Will you create a crude shelter from what you have with you (turn to **231**) or will you press on in the hope of finding a more suitable spot to sit out the bad weather (turn to **69**)?

135

As you make your way down the aisle between the rows of coffins, it occurs to you that if a necromancer has preceded you through here, any – or all – of the tombs could contain undead monstrosities, just waiting for the right moment to emerge and attack. The light from your lantern only extends so far, and every sarcophagus on which it falls casts a shadow that could hide the restless dead. But for the sound of your and Denati's breathing and footsteps, the hall is silent, and a sense of dread grows within you as you anticipate the grating of a stone lid being pushed aside, the shuffling of feet that have not trodden the ground in hundreds of years, but now move once more, driven by an overwhelming compulsion to destroy the living beings which have profaned their final resting place…

"Down this way now, I think." The scholar speaks softly, but the sound of his voice still startles you. It is all you can do to keep from crying out in terror, and you have to wait for your heart to slow to something near its normal rate before you feel ready to move on. The path you now follow is much narrower, and you must tread carefully to keep from brushing against the stone caskets to either side of you and, perhaps, disturbing their mouldering occupants.

At last you reach the mouth of a low tunnel, and you have to resist the urge to dash through it, heedless of what might lie beyond, in order to escape the oppressive atmosphere of the hall. Caution prevails, though, and as you draw closer, you can make out alcoves at either side of the tunnel mouth. An armoured skeleton stands in each alcove. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **268**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **33**.



136

While the middles of the steps are very worn and slippery-looking, the sides are in better shape, and you and Denati ascend to the exit without any trouble. Add 1 LUCK point. Turn to **15**.

137

Your apprehension fades as you concentrate on the tasks ahead of you, and by the end of your watch, you have built up your confidence. No bad dreams trouble you tonight, and unless you gave away one of your blankets yesterday, you have a good night's sleep for the first time in days (add 2 STAMINA points). If you did part with a blanket, the cold robs you of sleep almost as effectively as the nightmares did, and you gain no STAMINA for what little rest you do get. Turn to **220**.

138

You tug your sword from the dead Wolf, noting with some alarm how close the other Wolves and their masters have come while you were fighting, and turn to run on. Unpleasant rending sounds from behind you indicate that at least some of your pursuers have been unable to resist the lure of the still-warm carcass, but you do not slacken your pace or look back to see how many of the pack are still coming after you.

Up ahead you see Denati tottering onwards. He suddenly comes to a halt with an anguished wail, and as you draw closer, you see what has caused his distress. A crevasse, several metres wide, cuts across the ground a little further on, extending as far as you can see to both sides. However, to you it does not appear the impassable obstacle that your elderly companion clearly considers it. You are confident that you could leap it, and if you can find some way of helping Denati across, that might be enough to deter the Toa-Suo and Wolves from continuing to chase you. At the very least, having the crevasse in front of you would give you a better defensive position than you have had since attracting the beasts' attention. But if you were to make it across, and Denati could not manage it, you would be abandoning the scholar to a hideous death. Will you take a chance and jump (turn to **181**) or change direction and run parallel to the crevasse (turn to **8**)?

139

The Dragon opens its mouth and blasts you with a jet of freezing air. Lose 4 STAMINA points.

Chilled to the bone, you stumble back around the corner, bumping into Denati.

"That's quite a breeze out there," he comments, but then he sees the expression on your face and asks what is wrong.

You force a one-word explanation through benumbed lips, and your companion pales and scurries back along the passage. You totter along after him, expecting at any moment to feel the Dragon's icy breath or, worse still, its huge jaws on the back of your neck, but the creature appears satisfied with having driven you off, and you get back to the fork in the passage without any further trouble.

The two of you carry on into the tunnel leading north-east, hoping that it leads somewhere safer. Turn to **7**.

140

With a cautious glance upwards, you step through the archway, and are almost blown off your feet by a strong wind. Leaning slightly into it, you warn Denati of the powerful gusts sweeping through the chamber, and he braces himself before joining you. A moment later the wind changes direction, throwing you off balance again.

Crossing this chamber will not be easy with the capricious winds tugging and pushing you in every direction, to say nothing of the additional danger posed by the icicles dangling overhead, which may at any moment be dislodged by the buffeting of the winds. Turn to **82**.

141

One of the knots in your blanket rope does not hold, and you plummet screaming into the darkness. Somehow you manage to hang on to your lantern throughout the fall, which means that in the last half-second before you plough into the ground below, you are perhaps the only person in all of Titan's history to see the bottom of the ravine, covered in the bones of others who failed to stay on the bridge.

142

Nowri begins to move along the ledge, and as you watch her go, you cannot shake the impression that something is not right. She has already covered several metres when you realise what is wrong: no rope. In your collective excitement at finding the going so much easier, you neglected to make sure that Denati had passed it on to her before she moved off.

You warn her to stop and wait for you to throw her the rope, and Denati pulls off his gloves to try and undo the knot at his end, but Nowri tells you not to bother, as she is sure-footed enough not to need looking after. To prove her point, with her next step she deliberately plants her foot right next to the edge. Denati worriedly gnaws at his knuckles at this display of recklessness.

As if in response to her hubris, a loud screech rings out from above. Turn to **250**.

143

The Stag evidently reaches the conclusion that you are neither dangerous nor edible, as it turns away and wanders off to try and find something that fits into the latter category. You tell Denati to hurry up, and he clambers over the edge of the ridge to rejoin you. The two of you carry on up the mountain. Turn to **210**.

144

You have learned enough to be able to tell that what you have just been told is not completely correct, and there is no way that it can just be a mistake. The implications are staggering, and for several seconds you remain where you are, staring at the carving which has told you so much more than just what it says.

Denati's voice brings you back to yourself. "There are some icicles over behind you, where the cave roof slopes down."

You look at him. He has lifted the coffin lid, which you now perceive to be hinged on one side, and with some effort pushes it up until it falls wide open.

"Don't just stand there. We don't know how much time there is left before..." He tails off, noticing your expression, and scowls. "You must be cleverer than you look."

A single word forces itself out from between your lips: "Why?" Turn to **180**.

145

Despite your best efforts, you cannot break the grip of the bronze hand, which inexorably pulls your hand down, down, down. At last the tips of your fingers make contact with the surface of the bowl... And the metal hand slides away from yours, taking the die with it as it merges back into the surface of the dish, but releasing you. Taken by surprise, you stumble backwards, to the mild amusement of your companion.

You may have failed the test, but without suffering any adverse consequences (beyond mild embarrassment), and your willingness to try has earned you a minor reward. On one occasion when you must roll dice (including combat, though only one roll will be affected), you may choose the outcome rather than actually throwing the dice. Note that this boon may only be used to substitute for use of the dice: if you roll but do not like the number you get, there is nothing you can do to alter it.

If you have an iron key and want to see if it fits the lock in the side of the shrine, turn to **240**. Otherwise, you have finished here, and should continue along the passageway (turn to **17**).

146

Around forty metres beyond the corner, the light from your lantern reveals that the floor up ahead ends in an edge, beyond which you can see only darkness. You come to a halt – or at least try to – but now you come to realise that the slope of the floor has been imperceptibly increasing, and the slipperiness of the ground adds to the difficulty of your coming to a standstill. Roll two dice. If the total is equal to or lower than your SKILL score, turn to **270**. If it is higher than your current SKILL, turn to **31**.

147

Startled by the scholar's actions, you lose your grip on your lantern, which falls to the floor and breaks. This is highly unfortunate for you as, in the hope that with sufficient lubrication you will be able to extricate yourself from the tight squeeze in which are trapped, Denati has flung the oil from his unlit lantern over you, and the flame of your lantern ignites the thrown oil that has puddled around your feet. The oil with which you have been drenched rapidly ignites, and you are quickly immolated as a consequence of your companion's well-intentioned blunder.

148

With a derisory sneer, the Snow Witch holds out a hand to block your first blow. The blade cuts her palm, and though the wound does not bleed, the expression on your enemy's face turns first to one of pain, then to fear, and finally to anger. Nimbly jumping to her feet, she lashes out at you, talon-like fingernails narrowly missing your face as you recoil from the attack. Encouraged by the knowledge that you can harm her, you fight back.

SNOW WITCH SKILL 12 STAMINA 20

Against the Snow Witch, the Flame Sword only inflicts 2 STAMINA damage any time you hit her, but *Testing your Luck* will still affect the damage as outlined in the rules.

If at any point during the battle you roll a double while calculating the Snow Witch's Attack Strength, do not resolve that round of combat, but turn immediately to **46**. If you manage to defeat her, turn to **163**.

149

Taking hold of the rope, you attempt to shake it free from the rock around which you tied it. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **73**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **269**.

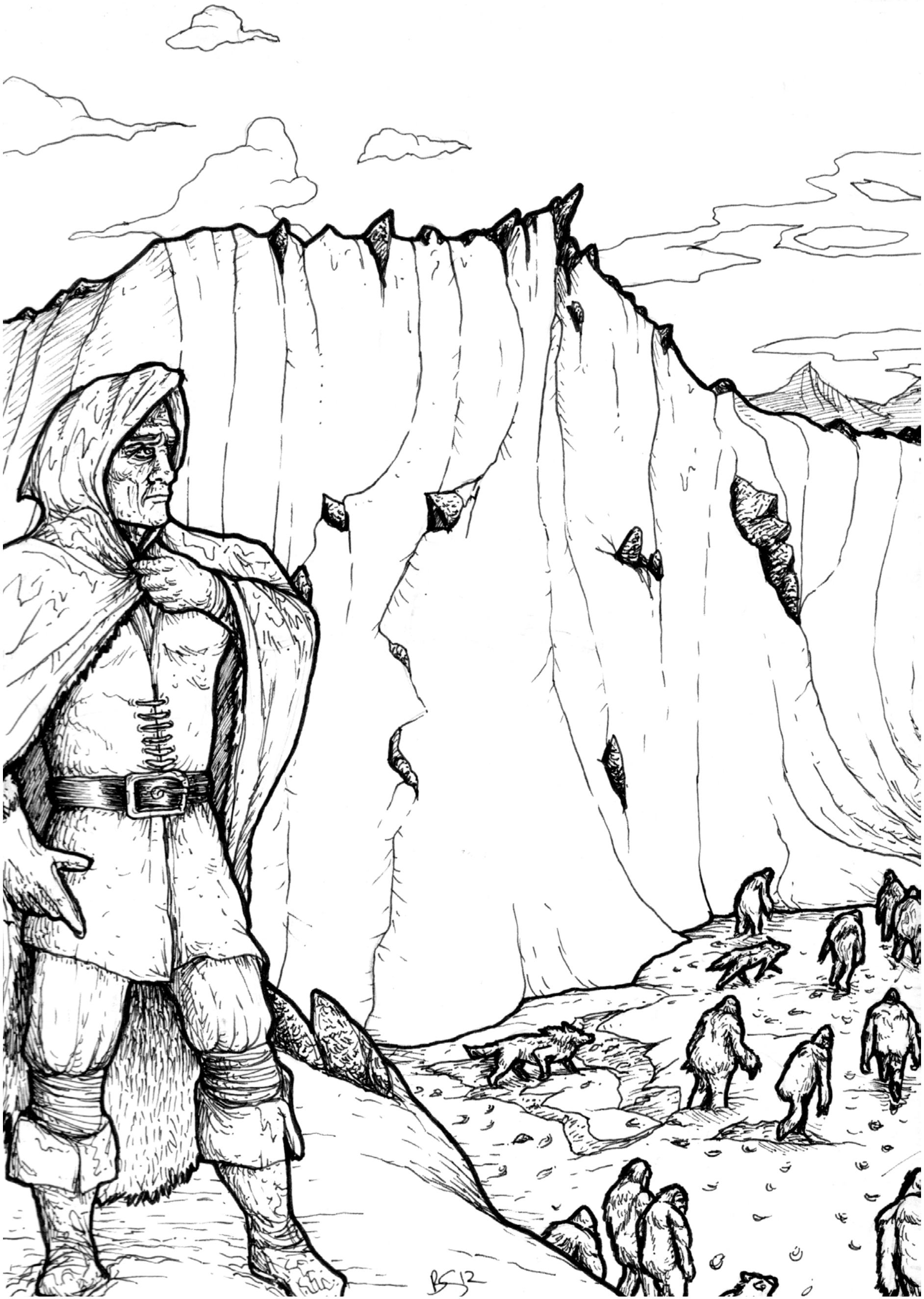
150

It is a cold but clear day, and despite the snow underfoot, you and Denati make good progress. A little after midday, you are making your way up a large dune when you faintly hear animalistic grunts and snarls from up ahead. Motioning to Denati to keep quiet, you continue upwards as stealthily as you are able, then cautiously peer over the brow to see what is on the other side.

The dune slopes down into a valley, currently being traversed by around a dozen fearsome beasts and five or six Snow Wolves. The larger creatures are hulking bipeds with shaggy white fur, vaguely reminiscent of Hobgoblins despite their great size: each is a couple of metres tall. While you have never seen the like of them before, you have heard trappers' tales of the dread Toa-Suo, and these brutes match the descriptions given in such stories.

Judging by what the trappers say, it is rare for the Toa-Suo to come this far south, but on occasion all of the tribes come together for some monstrous purpose, and judging by the purposeful manner in which this party is heading through the valley, you suspect that they are heading for just such a gathering.

The crunching of snow at your side indicates that Denati has caught up with you, and you turn to see him standing on the top of the dune. The breath catches in his throat as he catches sight of the dangerous menagerie below. Luckily for you, the sounds pass unnoticed by the passing pack, which continues on its way, and you motion to your companion to get down beside you where he is less likely to be seen. Will you stay where you are until they have moved out of sight, and then continue on your way (turn to **84**) or would you prefer not to risk the delay, and take a chance on sneaking across the valley behind their backs (turn to **233**)?



151

You cannot afford the time to stop and investigate every little oddity you pass on the mountain. Whatever has happened to the creature you can see does not concern you, and you return your attention to the climb ahead. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **247**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **85**.

152

The tip of your sword sinks into the Giant's shoulder and, with a bellow of pain, he jerks backwards out of the cave mouth, vanishing from sight as he falls down into the defile. However, the impact of his landing on the ground below is sufficient to dislodge a large quantity of the snow at the top of the rocky walls to either side of the gorge, and scant seconds after his departure allows some daylight back into the cave, the snowslip cuts off your view of the outside once more.

Tunnelling out is liable to be both difficult and dangerous, especially if the Giants remain in the defile, so you decide to see if there is another way out of the cave. Turn to **109**.

153

Under normal circumstances it would be absurd to even think of trying to harm the gargantuan beast in front of you, but with a magical weapon, especially one that gives off heat, you might be able to kill the monster and rid the world of its vile influence. If you wish to attempt to slay the beast, turn to **2**. If you would rather not take the risk of attacking it, turn to **103**.

154

You land badly and are unable to suppress a cry of pain. Denati hurries over to see what has happened and announces that your leg may be broken.

A loud growl from the far end of the cave alerts you to the presence of another problem, and the head of a large Silver Dragon emerges from the darkness, glowering down at you. Despite the agony you feel, you fumble for a weapon, but it is already too late. The Dragon belches a wave of freezing air at you, and on top of the pain of your injury, this is more than you can bear. You black out, and by the time you regain consciousness, you and Denati have been suspended from the roof of the cave alongside the Dragon's other victims. Even the slightest movement causes unbearable pain to shoot up your leg, and before long you lose consciousness a second time. Perhaps mercifully, you do not come round again.

155

Slamming into the level ground at the bottom of the slope hurts every bit as much as you thought it would, and before you have time to regather your wits, Denati lands on top of you. This almost certainly protects him from serious injury, as you make for a softer landing than the floor on which you lie sprawled, but it does you no favours. Roll one die, halve the number you rolled (rounding fractions up) and add three to determine how many STAMINA points you have lost falling and being fallen upon. If you rolled a 5 or 6, you have hurt your shoulder badly enough that you will have difficulty moving your arm from now on, and you must deduct a point from your SKILL as well.

Take what consolation you can from the fact that you did not land on your lantern, as neither you nor it would have fared well in that instance. If you have survived your undignified descent, turn to **246**.

156

Smoothing out the paper, you find that it is a screwed-up page from a book. It reads as follows:

> *'venerated above all others was Kurentz, the god of the contest. This was reflected in their love of such entertainments as gladiatorial battles, trials of strength and complex games of chance or strategy.*
>
> *'One thing that distinguished the devotees of Kurentz from other peoples with similar interests was that, while winning was, understandably, considered better than losing, great significance was attached to mere participation. The Cyrantian who played and lost was still considered superior to the one who did not even play.*
>
> *'Consequently, very few of the battles held in the Arena were to the death, and prizes would be awarded to all combatants afterwards. On the rare occasions that a contest had to end in death, it was claimed that Kurentz would bless the loser by allowing him or her to be reborn in the next generation. This belief was backed up by the occasional claims of veterans to recognise the mannerisms or techniques of long-dead contenders in one of the youths selected to join the gladiatorial teams at each solstice.*
>
> *'The winner of a deadly game earned the right to ask Kurentz for whatever they wanted. This is almost certainly figurative language, given that most of the rewards on record are increases in wealth or status. However, some scholars (notably Dugri of Hamaskis) assert that the god literally granted the champions' wishes, and the mundane nature of the prizes sought is due to the contestants' lack of imagination.*
>
> *'Among the most renowned and successful'*

The page breaks off mid-sentence. Return to the paragraph you were reading before you turned to this one.

157

Some force is drawing together the bones which had been strewn across the arena floor. They cluster together regardless of their original anatomical function, combining to create a multi-limbed behemoth which scuttles like a deformed Giant Spider across the sand towards you. Several 'limbs' reach out to attack you, each one terminating in a different type of bone: you recognise a thigh, a pelvis, the lower jaw of some predatory cat, half a rib cage, and even a cluster of mismatched fingers. Denati cowers behind you as you prepare to fight off this monstrosity.

BONE GOLEM SKILL 9 STAMINA 12

The Golem is able to inflict multiple attacks on you with its many pseudo-limbs. Every round it will generate as many Attack Strengths as half its current STAMINA score (rounding halves up), and you will have to defend against each one. While it can potentially inflict half a dozen blows on you in a single round of combat, you will only be able to hit it once at most each round. To make things worse, unless you are using the Flame Sword or the Shaman's bone club, you will only do 1 point of damage with every successful blow (2 if you successfully *Test your Luck*, but if you try to use LUCK and are Unlucky, you will do no harm at all). Any wounds you inflict with the Flame Sword and the bone club will each do 2 points of damage, and any use of LUCK to try and increase it will have the normal effect as outlined in the rules.

If, despite the added difficulties, you manage to reduce your opponent's STAMINA to zero, turn to **123**. If it brings your STAMINA to four or below, turn to **241** (even if, in doing so, it does enough damage to take your STAMINA down to less than one).

158

After about ten seconds the sound of falling icicles ceases, and Denati takes his hand from his mouth and puts his glove back on. "That's dislodged the loosest of them. We should be able to get across safely now."

You step through the archway, fragments of icicle crunching beneath your feet, and are immediately buffeted by a strong wind. Noticing something colourful mixed in with the broken ice nearby, you crouch down to investigate, and are puzzled to find a damaged kite, with a large hole in its fabric where it must have been impaled upon an icicle.

"What's that you've got there?" asks the scholar, and you show him.

"Ah, yes," he says. "I remember reading something about the Cyrantians holding kite-flying contests. You should hang on to that: it's supposed to be good luck."

You decide to humour your companion, and pick off the worst of the ice before stashing what remains of the kite in your pack. As you get up again, you are almost knocked down by a particularly strong gust of wind, and warn Denati to be careful. He braces himself before following you into the chamber. Turn to **82**, but note that if you roll a six while traversing the chamber, you should turn to **128** rather than the section specified.

159

Close to midday you have to climb several metres of near-vertical rock face, which is made easier by the large number of crevices that provide hand-and-footholds. Denati finds it less easy going, but manages it once you drop the rope to him. As you assist him over the edge at the top, his eyes widen in alarm. Turning, you are more than a little startled to see a lightly-armoured Barbarian in a fur cloak, standing right behind you, a large club in one hand. If you have a bone club, turn to **190**. If you do not possess this item, turn to **255**.

160

You tell the woman about the evil that is on the verge of rising again in these mountains, and your determination to prevent its return.

Her eyes widen. "I thought I was the hero here. You know, charging in to save a couple of helpless travellers. I had no idea you were on a proper noble quest. Wasn't even sure they happened any more. I'd love to join you." Suddenly embarrassed at her enthusiastic outburst, she stiffens her posture. "I mean, it would be an honour."

Denati moves to join the two of you. "It could be very dangerous," he warns.

"All the more reason to have another sword on your side," she replies, and offers you her hand. "My name's Nowri."

You introduce yourself and Denati, and the three of you set off to the west, keeping an eye out for an opportunity to traverse the crevasse in safety. Eventually you find a suitable spot to cross it, and proceed to the north.

Along the way, Nowri tells you a little of her past adventures. She usually works for traders, protecting them and their goods as they cross some of the more dangerous parts of Allansia, but has on occasion done what she considers more 'worthy' work. Her proudest achievement until now has been the time she helped defend a temple of Glantanka from Orcish raiders, and was rewarded with the flame-shaped sword.

Towards nightfall you find a reasonably sheltered spot in which to make camp. You must eat a meal, and can regain up to 4 STAMINA points if you lost any during the encounter with the Toa-Suo.

You and Nowri take it in turns to keep watch during the night, and if there are any predators in the area, they are wise enough to stay away from your camp. Turn to **185**.

161

Before the Dragon can take any action against you, you duck back around the corner, colliding with Denati and almost knocking him down. He looks a little affronted, but his expression turns to one of alarm the moment you mention the word 'Dragon'.

At your urging, the old man turns and hurries back the way he came, with you following closely behind. While the Dragon's body will not fit into this tunnel, its head could easily get through the opening, and its neck is long enough that you will not be out of range of an attack for a little while. Fortunately for you, the Dragon appears to have no interest in pursuing you, and you soon get back to the fork in the passageway. Hoping that no unpleasant surprises await you down the north-eastern turning, you continue along that way. Turn to **7**.

162

Digging through the snow that covers these bodies, you find that the taller of them is an Elf, the shorter one a Dwarf. Unusually for frozen corpses, they show some signs of decomposition. There is little of interest on either cadaver, but an ice-encrusted bracelet around the Dwarf's left wrist catches your eye. If you wish to attempt to remove the bracelet, turn to **232**. If you have not yet examined the body near the plinth, and now wish to do so, turn to **245**. If you have no further interest in the frozen dead, and have already looked at the plinth along with Denati, turn to **9**. If you would like to study the plinth, turn to **125**. If you would prefer to investigate the nearby tunnel entrance, turn to **47**.

163

You run the Snow Witch through with the Flame Sword. Her face contorts with hatred, and she spits the words, "Thirty years!" at you. Then her body shatters into thousands of tiny pieces, forming a small mound inside the coffin. The blade of your sword fragments at the same time, leaving only a short shard of metal protruding from the hilt. You are sorry to have lost such a fine weapon, but at least it did what you needed it to.

"My Queen!" wails a voice from behind you, "You were supposed to wake her for me, not kill her!"
ou turn to see Denati stumbling towards you, tears in his eyes, and a dagger clutched in one hand. You must defend yourself against this

treacherous servant of the Snow Witch as best you can with what remains of your weapon.

SERVANT OF THE
SNOW WITCH SKILL 9 STAMINA 8

Your broken blade only does normal damage, and you must reduce your Attack Strength by 1 for the duration of this fight. If you win, turn to **275**.

164

The only thing you can think of to reduce the risk of crossing the bridge is tying blankets together to make a crude rope. Once you have established that Denati can do knots, you set him that task while you return to the previous chamber and manhandle the heaviest piece of broken bench you can move down the passage to the end of the bridge (lose 2 STAMINA points for the strain). Using this to secure one end of the makeshift rope, you tie the other end around yourself and set out across the bridge, trying not to think about the possibility of falling over the edge. Roll two dice and add one. If the total is lower than your SKILL, turn to **211**. If it equals or exceeds your current SKILL score, turn to **262**.

165

Your struggles do nothing to break the grip of the ice on your hands, but they do gradually bring the coffin closer to the edge of the bridge. Preoccupied with your efforts to free yourself, you do not notice that this is happening until enough of the coffin is hanging over the side that its balance begins to shift, tipping over the edge. Realisation comes too late for you to do anything to stop the coffin from falling into the chasm below, or to prevent yourself from following it, your hands still frozen onto its end. While you have thwarted the Snow Witch's plans to return, at least until such time as her remaining servants manage to find out what you did with her body and come up with a way to retrieve it from this massive ravine, your victory comes at the cost of your own life.

166

The bone die rolls around inside the 'dish' into which you have cast it. It comes to rest in the very centre, and a network of cracks spreads out from it across the concave surface of the recess. And yet they are too straight, and too evenly spaced, to be cracks. Lines, then, dividing the interior of the bowl into a dozen segments. Feeling the pillar start to move, you automatically step back, and it begins to spin at great speed. The motion causes the die to start bouncing and clattering about, jumping from segment to segment. Gradually the rotation of the shrine slows and stops, and while the momentum of the die causes it to continue rattling around for a little longer, it soon comes to rest in one of the delineated segments. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **23**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **91**.

167

You glower at the Leopard, and when it growls again, you respond by roaring at it. Denati, unaware of what is going on, asks you if you are all right. Roll six dice. If the total you roll is equal to or lower than the sum of your current SKILL and STAMINA scores, the Leopard decides that attacking you would be unwise, and leaps down behind the boulder to seek easier prey elsewhere, allowing you and your confused companion to continue up the mountain (turn to **210**). If you roll more than your combined SKILL and STAMINA, your actions provoke the Leopard rather than scaring it off, and it pounces at you (turn to **101**).

168

You tell Denati what you have calculated Mayar's age to be, and he nervously prods at two of the symbols carved on the edge of the coffin lid. The great stone slab moves forwards, propelled by some unseen force, and for a moment you cringe away, fearful that it might smash into you. Instead, it moves silently to the right until the contents of the coffin are exposed to your view.

The gaping sarcophagus contains a human skeleton. The long-dead man's arms are folded across his rib cage, and a metal gauntlet covers each hand. Other than this, the stone coffin is empty.

Still a little nervous, you hand Denati your lantern and reach out to take the gauntlets, which slip smoothly from the skeletal hands within them. You remove your gloves and pull the gauntlets onto your own hands. They fit well, and are surprisingly warm. As long as you wear them, you may add 1 to your Attack Strength in any combat.

It is no longer possible to get to the symbols on Switor's sarcophagus, as the lid of Mayar's tomb covers them. Disappointed, you comment to Denati that you thought he said both men's treasures could be had, and he shrugs.

"That is what the plaque suggests, but evidently that's not the case. Unless we were supposed to open both sarcophagi at the same time. You must understand, a lot of what was common practise among the Cyrantians has been long since forgotten. We could easily be missing something that would have been taken for granted by the men who set the challenge. Look on the bright side: at least you got something good out of it."

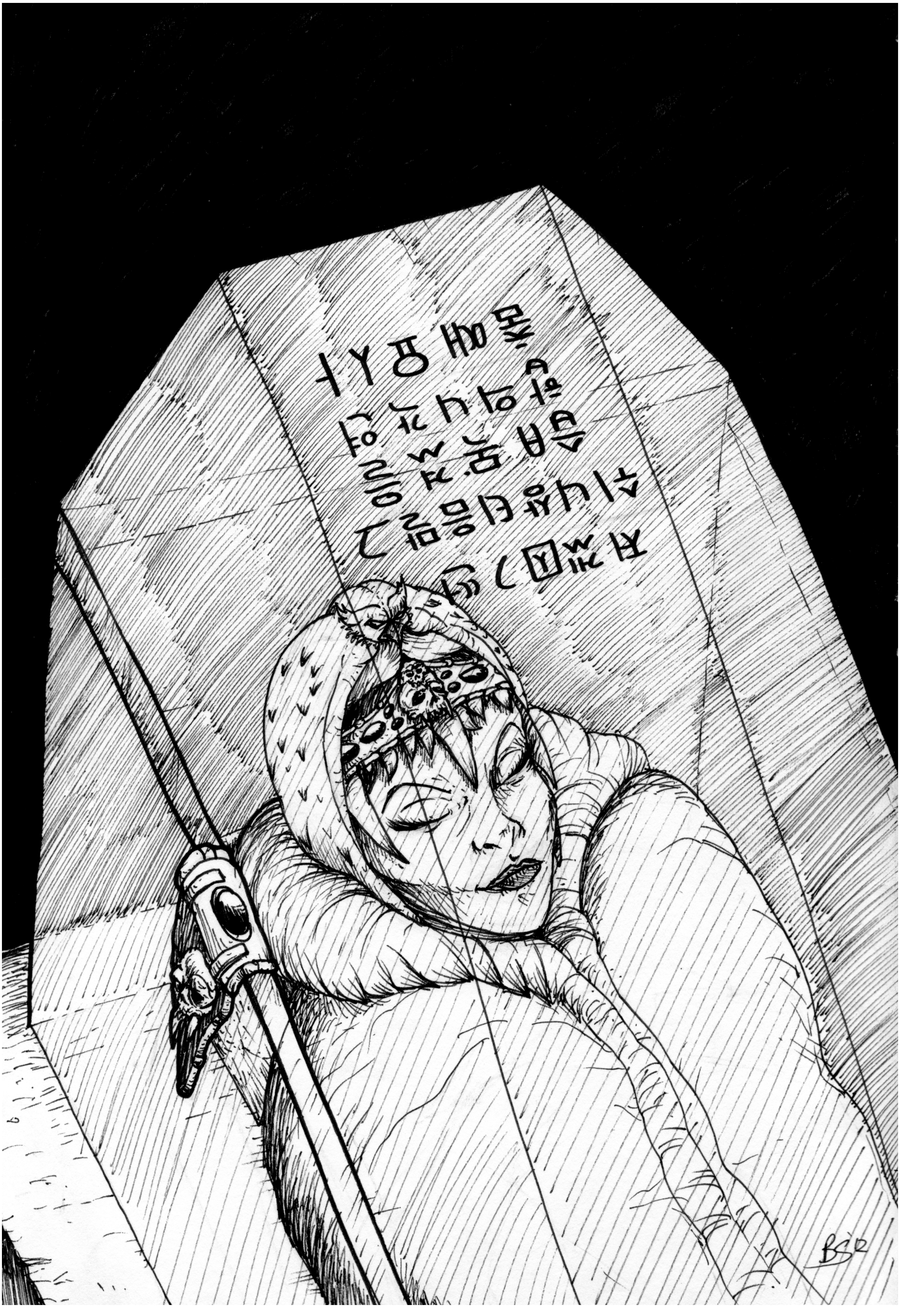
You still feel a little cheated, but concede that there is nothing to be gained by loitering here any longer. Proceed towards your goal by turning to **135**.

169

You reach into your pocket for something flammable, and your fingers close on the parchment you discovered in the passage leading here. Whatever has been written on it will be of no use to you if you die in this cave, so you decide to sacrifice it in order to improve your chances of survival. However, before you can do anything more, the Dragon's mouth opens to expel a blast of icy breath. Roll two dice and add two to the total. If the final total is lower than or equal to your current SKILL score, you manage to dodge this attack (turn to **251**). Otherwise, deduct 4 points of STAMINA and *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **251**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **273**.

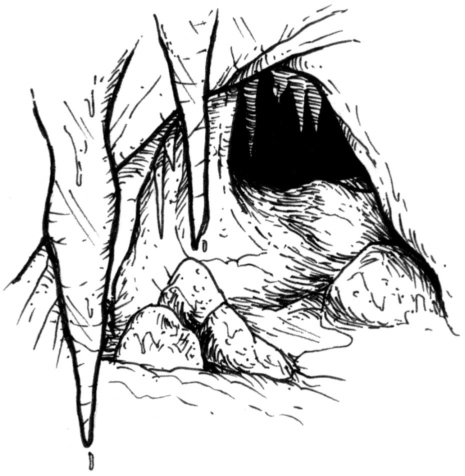
170

A few hundred metres beyond the valley you find your way blocked by a crevasse a little too wide for you to be certain that you could leap it in safety. You have no real choice but to follow the edge of the rift until the


저겠因ㄱ연
쉬니상티음말그
습日못젔을
합의니각연
춤때요사
BSR

gap narrows sufficiently that both you and Denati can get across it, a detour that takes the best part of an hour.

Beyond the crevasse, the best way onwards is a shadowy defile that slopes upwards. The snow crunches beneath your feet as you make your way up the incline. After a while you pause for breath, and it is then that you first become aware of a faint rhythmic trembling of the ground. Alarmed at the possibility that an avalanche could be imminent, you stare with dismay at the sheer rocky walls to both sides. Turn to **98**.



171

As you deliver the killing blow, you see the rest of the pack bounding towards you, and your heart sinks. You may be able to take a few more of them with you, but there is no way that you can prevail against so many.

You catch sight of movement out of the corner of your right eye, and for a moment you think that one of your pursuers has outflanked you, but the fur you see is too dark for a Snow Wolf or Toa-Suo. Then the moving figure comes properly into view, and you see that it is a long-haired warrior, wearing a jumbled mixture of furs and armour, and wielding a sword with a strangely-shaped blade. The warrior clashes with the first of the approaching Toa-Suo, and a single stroke takes off the beast's arm.

The clawed paw of a Toa-Suo narrowly misses connecting with your face, and you return your attention to your remaining opponents. Fight on until either they or you are dead, and if you are the survivor, turn to **274**.

172

You are now close enough to the exit from the chamber to be able to see it. Deduct the number of metres you are off-centre from the number you have advanced, and subtract the total from 30 to see how many more metres you still have to cover (so if, for example, you have advanced 28 metres but are one metre left of centre, you are three metres from the way out). If the total is below one, count it as one. Now roll again.

If you roll 1, roll again and advance that many metres.
If you roll 2, roll again, halve the number rolled (rounding fractions up), and advance that many metres.
If you roll 3 or 5, roll again, subtract 1 from the number rolled, and advance that many metres.
If you roll 4, roll again, add 2 to the number rolled, and advance that many metres.
If you roll 6, turn to **234**, but note down the number of this section and return here rather than to **82** if you survive.

If you have now reached the exit from the chamber, turn to **265**. Otherwise, roll again and do as directed above.

173

You press the tip of the sword against the Dwarf's wrist, and the heat it gives off begins to melt the ice. The decomposing flesh of the Dwarf's arm begins to smoulder, and you gag on the fumes it gives off. Lose 1 STAMINA point.

Despite this unpleasantness, you achieve the desired result. The bracelet comes loose, enabling you to remove it from the Dwarf's wrist. It is made of a loop of metal, and three worn metal discs have been attached to it with wire. Each disc has a shape inscribed on one side: the first a square, the second a star, and the third a circle.

Still a little queasy from the stench of burning flesh, you decide that you have had enough of the dead for now. If you have already studied the plinth along with Denati, turn to **9**. If you would like to do so now, turn to **125**. If you would rather investigate the nearby tunnel mouth, turn to **47**.

174

Now that the fight is over, Denati climbs up over the edge of the ridge to join you, and asks if you will be taking any of the Stag's meat for food. You say no, explaining that the food you already have should be enough, that cutting the Stag up would be time-consuming and messy, and that it won't even taste all that pleasant unless it's properly aged, which is not something that can easily be done up here.

"Then I suppose we should just keep climbing," sighs the scholar. You agree, and set off again. Turn to **210**.

175

The passage leads into a small chamber, and you come to a dead halt when the light from your lantern falls on the object in its centre. On a low pedestal is a transparent coffin of ice, which contains the body of the Snow Witch. A body which crumbled to dust thirty years ago, yet has somehow been reconstituted and lies as if asleep, clad in a scarlet robe. Is it still waiting to receive the vile spirit that once inhabited it, or are you already too late?

You can just make out a few lines of Cyrantian script carved into the lid of the coffin. Denati pushes past you in order to look more closely at the inscription, and the contact breaks the hold that dread had on you, enabling you to walk over to the coffin and more closely inspect its contents. The occupant looks very similar to the way she appeared in your dreams of late, but her eyelids are unmoving, and the malicious smile is not so pronounced. You may yet have time to prevent her from rising.

"How long is it since she was killed?" asks the scholar. You tell him that it has been around thirty years, and he gulps loudly. "Then we don't have much time. This says, 'The one who lies here shall rise with great power after thirty years have passed...'"

You look back from him to the figure in the coffin, half expecting to see that she is now exactly like your nightmare vision, but she remains motionless, her hands folded over her stomach.

"Wait, the rest of the inscription is better news," Denati adds. "Yes, it says she will rise again, but it goes on to specify that that's 'unless her heart is pierced with an icicle.' We're not too late!"

If you possess the remnants of a kite, turn to **76**. If you do not, turn to **32**.

176

Your eyes have now adjusted to what little light makes it from the cave mouth to its interior, and you need only deduct 2 from your Attack Strength for the rest of the fight. If you are the victor, turn to 14. If the Barbarian wins, he will then turn his attention back to Denati, with similarly lethal consequences for your companion.

177

Watched by your fearful companion, you move forward as far as you dare, and then, pressing your back against the icy wall of the cave, begin to edge through the narrow gap between it and the foul monstrosity in front of you. Roll two dice. If the total is equal to or lower than your SKILL, turn to **219**. If it exceeds your current SKILL score, turn to **253**.

178

Recognising you, Colpas grins nastily, and demands to know your business. Resigning yourself to a lengthy session of questioning, you start to explain that you are escorting a visiting scholar on an expedition. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **26**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **226**.

179

Chunks of the Ice Sentinel strew the floor around you, and you can now see that some of them have small metal discs frozen into them. You point these out to Denati, who identifies the discs as gambling tokens, and suggests that people might have thrown them into the fountain like some do with coins to this day in other parts of Allansia. He also theorises that the waters could have been enchanted to keep anybody from stealing discs, and advises you to leave the ice as it is, in case the Sentinel can reconstitute itself. This sounds like a good idea to you, and you decide to move on. You may take the worn stairs on your right (turn to **136**) or the ones in better condition to the left (turn to **105**).

180

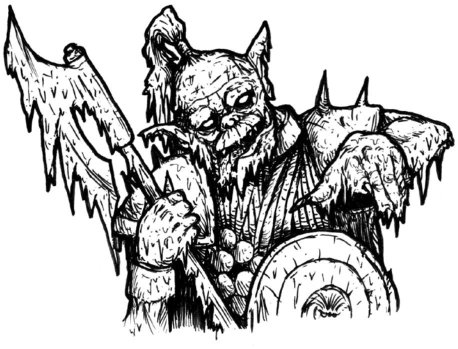
His eyes fixed on the supine form in the coffin, the traitor before you rambles, "This is my purpose. My Snow Queen shared her secrets with me, told me what to do if she should fall victim to some assassin. So when that black day came, I did as she directed. I found the way down here, placed her ashes in the coffin to await this glorious day. And then I devoted myself to learning all I could about this place, so I could unlock its mysteries for her. But the intensive study distracted me, caused me to lose sight of my goal. Until Reniso contacted me, seeking my help as he sought to slay my Queen, and then I knew what must be done. He should have struck the needful blow, sparing me from having to strike at my Queen in order to awaken her, but he recognised me and had to die. So that duty fell to you, the friend he had mentioned. But I wanted to show off my knowledge, and that vanity has cost me, exposing my deception."

His gaze hardens, fixes on you. "Since I cannot get you to do what is necessary, I shall have to attend to it myself."

While he has been talking, he has slipped the glove from his right hand, which he now begins to raise. Determined not to let him complete his plan, you draw a weapon and lunge at him.

SERVANT OF THE
SNOW WITCH SKILL 8 STAMINA 12

If you ever lose an Attack Round against him, do not deduct any STAMINA, but turn immediately to **88**. If you kill him without losing a single round of combat, turn to **122**.



181

Bellowing at Denati to watch out, and drawing on your last reserves of strength, you accelerate towards the lip of the crevasse, leaving it as late as you dare before making the leap that you hope will carry you to safety. Roll four dice. If the total is lower than or equal to your STAMINA score, you make a good landing on the far side (turn to **222**). If you roll higher than your current STAMINA, turn to **106**.

182

The wind drives tiny daggers of snow into your face, and you realise that you could be no more than a metre away from an inviting cave mouth, and yet not see it. The rope you are holding goes slack and, following it back to its end, you stumble over the prone form of Denati. He has collapsed, unable to bear the intensity of the storm raging about you, and you find yourself unable to get up again, so fierce is the wind. Snow rapidly accumulates on top of the two of you, and it and the chill wind sap your strength, causing you to drift into a dreamless sleep from which you will never wake – at least as a living being.

183

After a short wait, you see your companion come into view, and the two of you hurry away from the Demon's cave. A short distance along the passage, light from your lantern reveals a small alcove containing what appears to be a shrine, covered with intricate carvings. Denati asks if you could stop and let him take a closer look at it. If you are prepared to do so, turn to 58. If you are not convinced that you can spare the time for him to indulge his academic interest, turn to **17**.

184

Before you is a sight straight out of your worst nightmares, only more horrific.

One of the many dangers you faced during your time as a slave in the Crystal Caves was the risk of being sacrificed to the Demon that the Snow Witch's willing servants worshipped. Her followers would periodically perform monstrous rites before a huge effigy of the Demon, forcing a number of slaves to watch. At the end they would choose one of the slaves to throw to the statue, which would then become possessed by the spirit of the Demon and animate in order to slay the luckless victim.

The effigy was destroyed at around the time the Snow Witch was originally defeated. You never saw exactly what happened, and have heard contradictory descriptions: according to some accounts, the adventurer who slew her physical body first weakened her power by shattering the statue, while others make out that it was toppled by vengeful slaves after her ‘death’ robbed her of the ability to punish their rebellion. Whatever the truth, you saw the fragments before leaving the caves, and even kicked one of them across the floor of the cavern where it used to sit. Despite that small gesture of defiance, the statue still loomed large in your nightmares.

The true form of the Demon is far worse, and this is what you can see, straight in front of you, taking up most of the space in the chamber it occupies. It is even more massive than the statue was, its head alone at least two metres high. You have no way of telling the size of the whole thing, as it is buried up to its waist, but each of the arms folded in front of its bloated stomach is thicker than your torso. Its flabby blue-grey flesh gives off a sickly gleam that dully lights up the whole cave.

For some time you cannot move a muscle, not even to extinguish the warm glow of your lantern, and simply stand there in fearful anticipation of the moment when the monster will turn its terrible gaze upon you and exact vengeance for that kick. Gradually, though, you realise that the beast seems unaware of its surroundings. Indeed, but for the slow rising and falling of the brute’s chest, you might even dare to believe that it is dead.

By your side, Denati also gapes at the Demon in horrified fascination. “Can it be asleep?” he whispers.

The downward tilt of that monstrous head suggests that he may be right, and you reflect that, if so, the Demon cannot be a particularly light sleeper, or it would have woken at the noise of your reaching the bottom of that slope. Nevertheless, it seems wise to avoid making any unnecessary noises, as the consequences of disturbing the beast’s slumber are not likely to be pleasant. If you have the Flame Sword, turn to **153**. If you do not, turn to **103**.

185

You are all up with the dawn, and Denati frowns as he watches the sun rise.

“We’ve gone off track,” he announces. “It probably happened when those animals were chasing us. Now, if the records I’ve studied are reliable, the most direct route will mean climbing that...” He indicates a jagged peak. “But it looks very dangerous. It would be safer to take a longer way round, but that’s going to cost us a lot of time.”

“If this Snow Witch is as bad as you say, we can’t afford to waste any time,” says Nowri. “I say we go direct.”

Without even waiting for you to express an opinion, she starts marching in the direction Denati is pointing. He shrugs and sets off after her, and you have little choice but to follow the two of them. Turn to **83**.

186

The Orc is dead once more. To ensure that it cannot rise and attack you yet again, you take the rusty axe it carries and sever its head. The haft snaps from the force of your blow, so you use the stump that remains in your hands to separate the collar from its wearer and fling it away. This victory gives you more confidence, and you may add 1 LUCK point.

As you step back from the body, you feel something hard underfoot and, raising your foot to see what you had trodden on, see a small bone die with strange symbols carved on its faces. It must have been one of the random items with which the Orc had adorned himself, and you decide to keep it as a memento.

If you have not yet looked at the other two bodies, you decide to make sure that they cannot animate and attack you or Denati (turn to **162**). Otherwise, if you have already taken a look at the plinth your companion is studying, turn to **9**. If not, you may do so by turning to **125**, or you can turn your attention to one of the exits from this chamber at **47**.

187

Suddenly a much louder cracking sound drowns out the noise of the icicles breaking off and shattering on the floor. Denati’s hand drops to his side and, the blood draining from his face, says, “I think we should...”

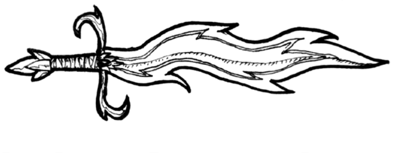
Before he can complete his sentence, the entire ceiling of the Chamber of the Four Winds caves in, the resultant shockwave knocking you and your companion to the ground. Fragments of rock and ice shower over you. Lose 4 STAMINA points.

If you are still alive, you wait until the tremors have subsided and then stand and brush off the debris. Shamefacedly, the scholar does likewise. “I did warn you that it might go wrong.” He stoops to pick up the wooden sign, which has also fallen down, and it comes apart in his hands. With a sigh, he drops the pieces. “They’ll never forgive me at the college if they hear about this.”

The remnants of something colourful lie mixed in with the broken stone and icicles around your feet. Curious, you pick up the pieces, which turn out to be made of wood and some kind of fabric.

“I think it was a kite,” Denati tells you. “The Cyrantians used to fly them in contests. They believed that the ones that got stuck up there, then fell down again, brought good luck.”

His talk of good luck after what has just happened seems so absurd that you burst out laughing and, on a whim, stuff the kite fragments into your backpack. Looking through the arch, you see that huge mounds of rubble block the way onwards, leaving you with no choice but to return to the junction and take the passage leading down. Turn to **146**.



188

You are too quick, and miss the icicle altogether. As you hit the ground, you agilely roll and pivot, coming to a halt in a low crouch, poised for action. A wave of icy cold energy erupts from the coffin, sweeping over you. Roll four dice. If the total is less than or equal to your current STAMINA, turn to **119**. If it exceeds your STAMINA score, turn to **104**.

189

An insubstantial hand passes through your body, and the touch of your opponent instantly paralyses you. Lose 4 STAMINA points. If you are still alive, you hear a metallic tinkle, like the sound of a coin being dropped, and see the translucent form of the Phantom fading back through the sarcophagus lid.

After a few minutes, Denati emerges from hiding and places the mouth of a stone flask at your lips. Much of the potent liquor dribbles down your chin and onto the floor, but what little does make it into your mouth helps dispel the numbness, and within seconds you are able to move stiffly.

As you take a few tottering steps, you again hear the metallic tinkling. Denati stoops to investigate, and with a bitter laugh picks something from the floor. “Your ‘consolation prize’ for being defeated!” He holds up a metal disc with a circle inscribed upon it. “Given its age, it’s probably worth a lot more than its former owner thought, if you can find a collector willing to buy it. Still, it’s not much use to you right now.”

Movement comes a little more easily now, and you decide to leave the rest of the coffins alone and concentrate on finding what you came here for. Turn to **135**.

190

The Barbarian’s eye falls on the club. Recognising it, he raises his own weapon and charges at you, roaring a battlecry. You can tell that it would be futile to try and explain why you had to kill the club’s former owner, and steel yourself for another fight.

BARBARIAN SKILL 9 STAMINA 9

He is determined to fight to the death. If you survive the battle, turn to **126**.

191

In places the cavern floor is strewn with bones, and you take great care not to disturb them as you pick your way to safety. At last you and your companion reach the mouth of the tunnel that leads out and, releasing a breath you had not realised you were holding, you continue out into the daylight. Add 1 LUCK point for avoiding a confrontation with the Dragon, and turn to **87**.

192

You turn your attention to the rest of your pursuers, still on the far side of the crevasse. Without warning, the Wolves begin to howl and whine, and the Toa-Suo clutch at their heads and recoil. Could they be expressing grief at the death of the one you killed? None of what you have heard about these creatures before suggests that they have any feelings for their own dead (except possibly hunger), but it is clear that something is troubling them. After a few seconds, they turn and hurry back the way they came, leaving you and your companion in peace.

You look down at Denati, concerned that he might have been injured when he landed this side of the rift. He is hunched up, his hands clasped in front of his mouth, evidently shaken by what he has been through, but physically he appears to be unharmed. Gradually he recovers his breath and, after picking up his right glove, which must have come off when he landed, he pulls it back onto his hand and shakily stands.

“Shall we go on?” he asks, and you break into a grin at this minor display of spirit.

The two of you trudge onwards and, to your relief, the next few hours pass without incident. As the sun sinks towards the horizon and the shadows lengthen, you decide to make camp for the night, and settle in a reasonably sheltered hollow. You must eat a meal now, but it will restore some STAMINA if you are at less than full strength.

You and Denati take it in turns to keep watch throughout the night, which is disturbed only by another of your bad dreams. Turn to **4**.

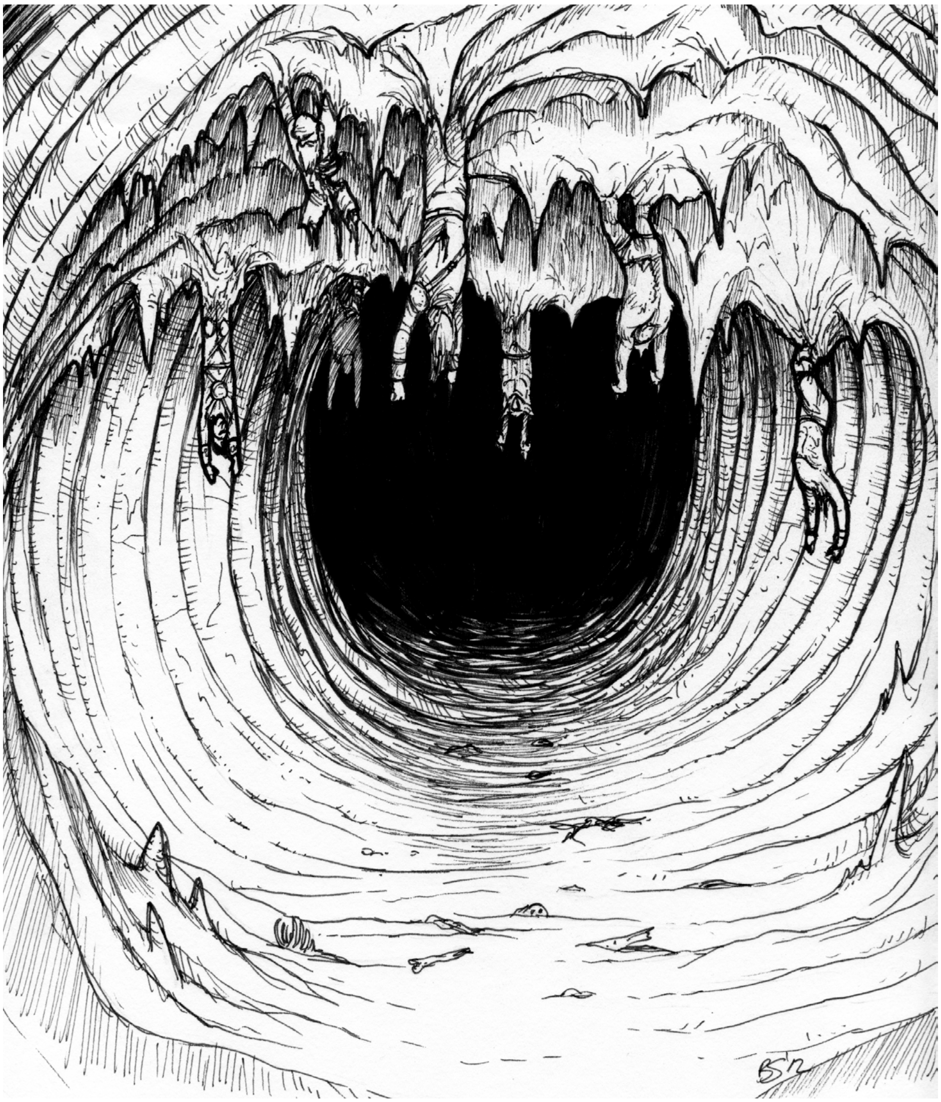
193

You have misjudged your leap, and only manage to grab onto the lip of the cave mouth with one hand. The pounding of Giants’ feet fills the defile and, certain that you will be trampled to death if you fall back down, you desperately strain to be able to reach the edge with your other hand, and then to drag yourself up and inside. The exertion costs you 3 STAMINA points.

The flickering light of a nearby fire illuminates the cave, showing that it slopes downwards and opens out after a few metres. You squeeze through the narrow passage into the wider space, and an alarming sight greets you as you emerge from the entrance. Turn to **50**.

194

You pitch forwards, your feet leaving the ground, and lose your hold on your lantern, which noisily bounces down the slope ahead of you. After a fraction of a second, you land face-first on the ground, your head rebounding with the force of the impact (lose 2 STAMINA points). Somehow you have the presence of mind to keep your head up as you slither onwards on your stomach, so the ground over which you are sliding at an ever-increasing speed cannot abrade your face. This also provides the mixed blessing of enabling you to see when your lantern comes to rest, still faintly shining, as it reaches the flatter ground at the bottom of the slope. While it is reassuring to know that your rapid descent will not end with your plunging into an abyss, it is alarming to see the ground ahead of you getting closer and closer... Turn to **155**.



195

You cross to the far side of the chasm without incident and quickly undo the rope. Denati reels it in and ties it around himself before following you. Though clearly terrified at the prospect of falling, the scholar likewise makes a safe crossing, and it only takes him a short while to regather his wits before the two of you can carry on down the passage that leads onwards. This time you will have to leave the rope behind, of course. Turn to **175**.

196

Your fingers close around the falling key before it can smash in the bowl, from which the die has inexplicably vanished. As you had thought, the key is made of ice, and consequently is likely to melt before long, but if, as seems probable, it fits the lock in the side of the shrine, it should last long enough to do what you need it to do. You insert it into the keyhole and turn it. Turn to **130**.

197

It occurs to you that Denati may be able to tell you something about what you have found down here, and before he settles down for the night you show it to him and ask if he knows anything about it. If you have a bracelet with metal discs attached, turn to **257**. If the only thing you have acquired in this cavern is a bone die, turn to **22**.

198

You may take the Shaman’s bone club with you as a back-up weapon if you wish. It carries no bonus, but may be more effective than your sword against some opponents.

Denati is more interested in something he has noticed on a cord around the dead Barbarian’s neck, and he extricates it from amidst the necklaces of animal parts. A slim leather pouch, with a small hole cut into it to display the item held within, contains a worn metal disc with symbols carved into it. “Well, I never! This looks like a Cyrantian gambling token. You know, to the Cyrantians, games were not so much a pastime as a way of life.” He hands it to you and thinks for a moment. “I wonder how this madman got his hands on it.”

The scholar turns to look at the back of the cave, and indicates a large crack, possibly just wide enough to squeeze through. “These mountains must be riddled with passageways. It’s just possible that that might lead to the ruins of the city.”

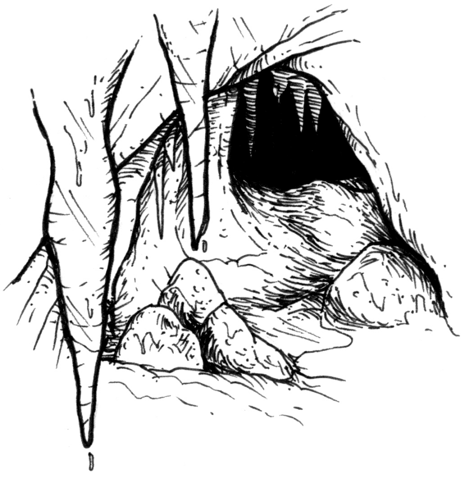
If you wish to investigate the crack, turn to **80**. If you would rather not take chances in unfamiliar caves, and concentrate on getting to the ones you know to be connected to the lost city, turn to **36**. Either way, you may eat Provisions before moving on.

199

Early in the afternoon you notice something standing out against the white of the snow a little way over to your right. It appears to be a small animal with grey fur, and part of the snow around it is stained red with what must be blood. If you want to take a closer look at it, turn to **37**. If you ignore this distraction and keep going straight on, turn to **151**.

200

You ask Denati if this could be a burial chamber in the city you seek, and he shakes his head. “No, no. The clothing on these bodies is far too modern. Besides, the way they’re hanging up there doesn’t suggest any kind of respect for the dead. The last time I saw anything like that, it was sides of meat in a butcher’s... shop...”



Disturbed at the implications of this realisation, you try to decide what to do now. If you wish to try and climb back up to the opening through which you fell into this cave, turn to **132**. If you would rather go further into the cave in the hope of finding an easier way out, turn to **213**.

201

The winds have forced you across to the left wall of the cavern. Consequently, you cannot go any further to the left, and until such time as you are able to move away from the wall, any further winds from your right will leave you unable to make progress. Roll the die again and follow the directions below.

If you roll 1, the wind dies down, allowing you to move away from the wall. Move one metre to the right, then roll one die, subtract 1 from the number rolled, and advance that many metres towards the exit.

If you roll 2, a strong headwind limits forward progress and prevents transverse movement. Roll one die, halve the number rolled (rounding fractions up) and advance that many metres.

If you roll 3, you cannot move, and must wait for the wind to change direction. Roll again.

If you roll 4, the wind from behind is so strong that you are too focused on staying upright to change direction. Roll one die, add two, and advance that many metres.

If you roll 5, the wind propels you right, away from the wall. Move right one metre, and roll one die to see how many metres you advance.

If you roll 6, turn to **234**.

If you have now advanced 25 metres or more, turn to **172**. If you have yet to get that far, but did move right, return to **82** and roll on the table there. Otherwise, roll again and do as directed above.

202

You were not fast enough, and Snow Wolves and Toa-Suo surround you, clawing and biting on all sides. You fight valiantly, staining the snow around you with the blood of seven or eight of your opponents, but cannot hope to prevail against so many enemies. Eventually you sink to the ground, overwhelmed by multiple wounds, jaws taking you in the throat, with the sound of Denati's screams ringing in your ears as a few of the beasts tear him apart.

203

The slight distortion the crystal faceplate causes to your vision is not enough to impair your effectiveness in battle, but it is sufficient to prevent the Snow Witch's considerable hypnotic powers from having any effect on you. In the moment before she realises that you have not fallen under her spell, you manage to inflict a light wound on her. Deduct 2 points from her STAMINA. If this is enough to kill her, turn to **163**. Otherwise, continue your fight against her, paying no special attention to any further doubles that get rolled for her, and turn to **163** if you win the battle.

204

You turn round, pull the door open, and cry out in startled fear at the sight of a strange man just outside, his right hand raised in a fist. He too gives a cry, and stumbles backwards, his other hand clutching at his chest.

"Sorry!" he gasps. "I didn't mean to startle you. I was just about to knock at the door when you opened it."

As you catch your breath, you study the stranger. He is quite old, probably in his sixties, and wears a purple cloak. He returns your gaze, and a puzzled frown creeps upon his brow.

"But you can't be Reniso, not so young. This is the right house, isn't it? I'm sure it's the one the warden said."

This is a problematic situation. If you let the stranger in, he will see the body, and might well draw the wrong conclusions, but if you try to send him away, sooner or later somebody will direct him back here, and your actions will seem even more suspicious. Uncertain of what to do, you buy yourself a few more moments by asking him who he is. Turn to **71**.

205

One last vigorous shove is all it takes to send the coffin over the edge. It tumbles end over end and disappears into the darkness, eventually hitting the bottom of the ravine with a crash that is barely audible to your ears. Even if the Snow Witch's followers somehow manage to discover what you have done with her new body, it will not be easy for them to retrieve it. Indeed, judging by the performance of the one enduring servant of hers that you have encountered, you doubt that they have the capabilities to ever bring back their vile Mistress. Turn to **49**.

206

You suddenly find yourself unable to move any further into the crack. The pressure of the rock against your chest and back makes it difficult to breathe, and you try to go back the way you came, only to discover that you are too firmly wedged to move in either direction. You call out to Denati to help you, but his meagre strength is not enough to make a difference. "Hold on. I know what to do," he tells you, and after a moment you are suddenly drenched with a cold and slimy liquid. Roll one die. If you roll a 1, turn to **147**. If you roll a 2 or higher, turn to **28**.

207

Out of the corner of your mouth you mutter to Denati that he should stay where he is until you tell him otherwise. Then you watch the Stag, hoping that it will realise you are not a threat and return to its search for food. Roll one die. If you roll 1~3, turn to **110**. If you roll 4~6, turn to **143**.

208

There are twelve steps between you and the top, but you do not have to use every one of them on the way up. At full stretch you can miss two steps, so you could, potentially, only step onto every third step. If you want to avoid any steps, decide which ones you will stand on (bearing in mind the fact that you cannot skip more than two consecutive ones, so you could, for example, choose to walk on the second, fifth, seventh and tenth ones). Then roll one die twice to determine which step is charged with energy. If you roll an odd number on the first die, the number on the second die indicates the active step. If the first number is even, add six to the second number to identify the step. If that is not one of the steps you chose to avoid, roll one more time. If you roll an odd number, lose that many STAMINA points. If you roll an even number, gain that many STAMINA points.

Denati follows in your footsteps (unless you take damage, in which case he avoids the step that hurt you) and reaches the top unharmed. You both head along the passageway that leads out of the chamber. Turn to **15**.

209

After the nerve-wracking passage through the tombs, this is more than you can bear. You panic, dropping the lantern and turning to flee from your skeletal attackers, barely noticing that you knock down and trample your companion in your crazed flight. In the darkness you repeatedly collide with obstacles, and at some point it penetrates your awareness that you have returned to the Hall of Contenders, and everything that you have bumped into is a tomb. This realisation is more than your terror-crazed mind can handle, and you collapse in a gibbering heap, never to rise this side of death. Whether or not the Hall was haunted before, within a few days your insane ghost will inhabit it.

210

As you continue upwards, Denati starts to gasp and wheeze, and before long you are also feeling the ill effects of the thinness of the air at this altitude. Lose 1 STAMINA point.

You stop to acclimatise yourself to the conditions up here, and may eat Provisions while you grow accustomed to the thinner atmosphere. Gradually, breathing becomes easier, and you set off again once your aged companion feels ready to go on.

A little under an hour later you catch sight of a hole in the ground ahead of you, and are about to detour around it when Denati places a restraining hand on your arm. “Where are you going? That’s... possibly a way into the Crystal Caves. We should at least take a look.”

You tie one end of your rope around a decent-sized rock not far from the hole, attach your lantern to the other end, and carefully lower it down into the darkness. Soon it becomes clear that the scholar may be right: certainly, the light indicates that the hole leads into a spacious cavern. Not an excessively deep one, though, as the rope reaches to the floor of the underground chamber with metres to spare.

After checking that the rope is secure at this end, you climb down it, and reach the ground below safely. It only takes a moment to detach the lantern so you can use it to light your way around the cavern.

A layer of snow covers everything, at its thickest beneath the mouth of the hole. Nevertheless, you are able to make out a central plinth, with what appears to be a body sprawled on the floor close to it. Two other huddled mounds, which you take to be more corpses, one of them significantly larger than the other, lie a short distance from the mouth of a tunnel leading into the depths of the mountain. There is a similar tunnel entrance in the opposite wall of the cavern.

You call up to Denati and tell him to join you down here, and the old man nervously descends the rope, with you underneath, ready to catch him if he should slip. Almost as soon as his feet touch the ground, the plinth catches his attention, and he hurries across to it. Pulling off a glove to brush away some of the snow that covers the plinth, he peers closely at its surface.

If you want to try and get your rope back, turn to **149**. If you do not want to go to the effort of retrieving it, you may go over to look at the plinth Denati is studying (turn to **125**), or take a closer look at the snow-covered corpses (turn to **34**)?

211

Your precautions prove unnecessary, as you reach the far side of the ravine without any trouble, and while the crossing is clearly not an easy one for Denati, he does not slip or fall either. Trying to retrieve the blankets would be pushing your luck, though, so you have to leave them trailing across the bridge and hope that they will be recoverable and in a fit state to use by the time you come back. For now, you must press onwards. Turn to **175**.

212

She smiles. “It didn’t look like a fair fight, so I just stepped in to even the odds a bit. How did you wind up with that lot after you anyway?” A cry from behind you reminds you that Denati may require some assistance, and you glance back over your shoulder at him. He presses a finger to his lips before slumping back into the snow.

You think it unlikely that anyone working in the service of evil would have made any effort to save you from the pack of Toa-Suo, but even so, this woman is a complete stranger, and you have no way of knowing whether or not you can trust her. Will you risk telling her the truth (turn to **160**), or would you rather make something up (turn to **41**)?

213

Whatever killed the men who hang from the roof of this cave may not be far away, so you tread carefully as you move on, keeping close to the wall so as not to pass directly beneath the frozen cadavers. After several metres the light of your lantern spills out into a far larger cave, and after you have gone a few paces further, your breath catches in your throat as the illumination glints on the scales of some massive creature.

You stop still, signalling to Denati to do likewise, and peer forwards, soon working out that you are facing the haunches of a Silver Dragon. Luckily for you, it is facing the other way, and has not yet noticed you. You can also make out a faint gleam of daylight on the far side of the cavern, potentially indicating a way out, if you can get past the Dragon without attracting its attention. Turn to **65**.

214
In this narrow gorge it will not be easy for you to avoid the rapidly approaching Giant. You make a leap for the overhead cave mouth, hoping to be able to haul yourself out of the way. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **235**. If you are Unlucky, you do not quite reach the opening, and uselessly claw trails in the snow that blankets the rocky wall as you drop back to the ground (turn to **115**).

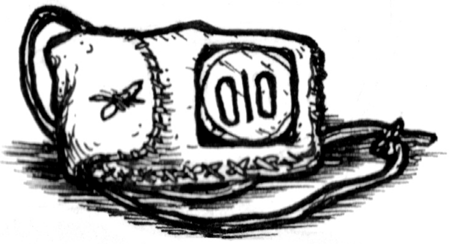
215
Early in the afternoon you round a large boulder, and hear a low growl from overhead. Looking up, you see a Snow Leopard crouching on top of the boulder, regarding you with unwelcome interest. You hesitate, unwilling to expose either your back or your companion to this predator, and try to decide how to deal with this situation. If you go for the simple approach, and just attack, turn to **101**. If you would rather offer the Leopard some food from your backpack, turn to **263**. If you want to try and intimidate it into going elsewhere, turn to **167**.

216
Before you can step through the archway, Denati puts a restraining hand on your shoulder. “I think it may profit us to know which way the wind is blowing in there. Good thing I collected those feathers, eh?”

He holds his left hand out in front of him, palm upwards, places a feather on it, and steps forward, telling you, “Now stick close to me.”

A powerful draught snatches the feather from his hand, carrying it up into the air, tugging it first left and then right. Strong gusts also buffet you, but you stand your ground against them. Then, abruptly, the wind drops, the feather fluttering down towards the cavern floor, and Denati urges you, “Now, go!”

You cover several metres before the wind picks up again, at which point your companion tells you to stop again, and gets out another feather. You watch as that one dances in the breeze. Roll one die. If you roll a 1~5, turn to **68**. If you roll a 6, turn to **10**.



217
With a contemptuous sneer, the Snow Witch reaches out to grab your weapon, casually snapping it in half. You cry out in agony as a searing cold welds the remaining stump to your hand. Dropping the part she broke off, which shatters on the floor, she then grips your arm just below the shoulder, and the chill which spreads through your body makes it difficult to even breathe, let alone resist.

“You have spirit,” observes the Snow Witch. “It will not survive, but that is unimportant. I require only obedience.”

The moment her fangs sink into your neck, you are transformed into a mindless being more ice than flesh, the first of many Ice Ghouls with which she plans to subjugate all Allansia, and beyond.

218
The die bounces around inside the basin-like hollow before coming to rest. Suddenly, too quickly for you to react, a thick bronze arm erupts from the base of the dish and seizes the hand with which you threw the die. It then begins to retract, and you struggle to break free, unwilling to discover what dreadful fate awaits anyone dragged into the bowl. Roll four dice. If the total is less than or equal to your current STAMINA, turn to **6**. If it is higher than your STAMINA score, turn to **145**.

219
You move around to your right until you reach a point where you can see that there is indeed an opening that leads from the cave on the far side of the Demon. Signalling to Denati to come after you, you sidle onwards until you emerge from behind the beast, after which you can proceed to the exit with ease. Turn to **183**.

220
The next thing you know, Denati is crouched at your side. “It’s almost time,” he tells you.

You get up and quickly pack away the bedding, then join him to watch as the first hints of the coming dawn tint the sky. A worrying thought occurs to you, and you ask how likely it is that what is supposed to happen will still do so after all this time.

“It should still work. I mean, whatever magic preserved the inscription for the past few centuries is likely to have kept everything else functional as well,” the scholar reassures you.

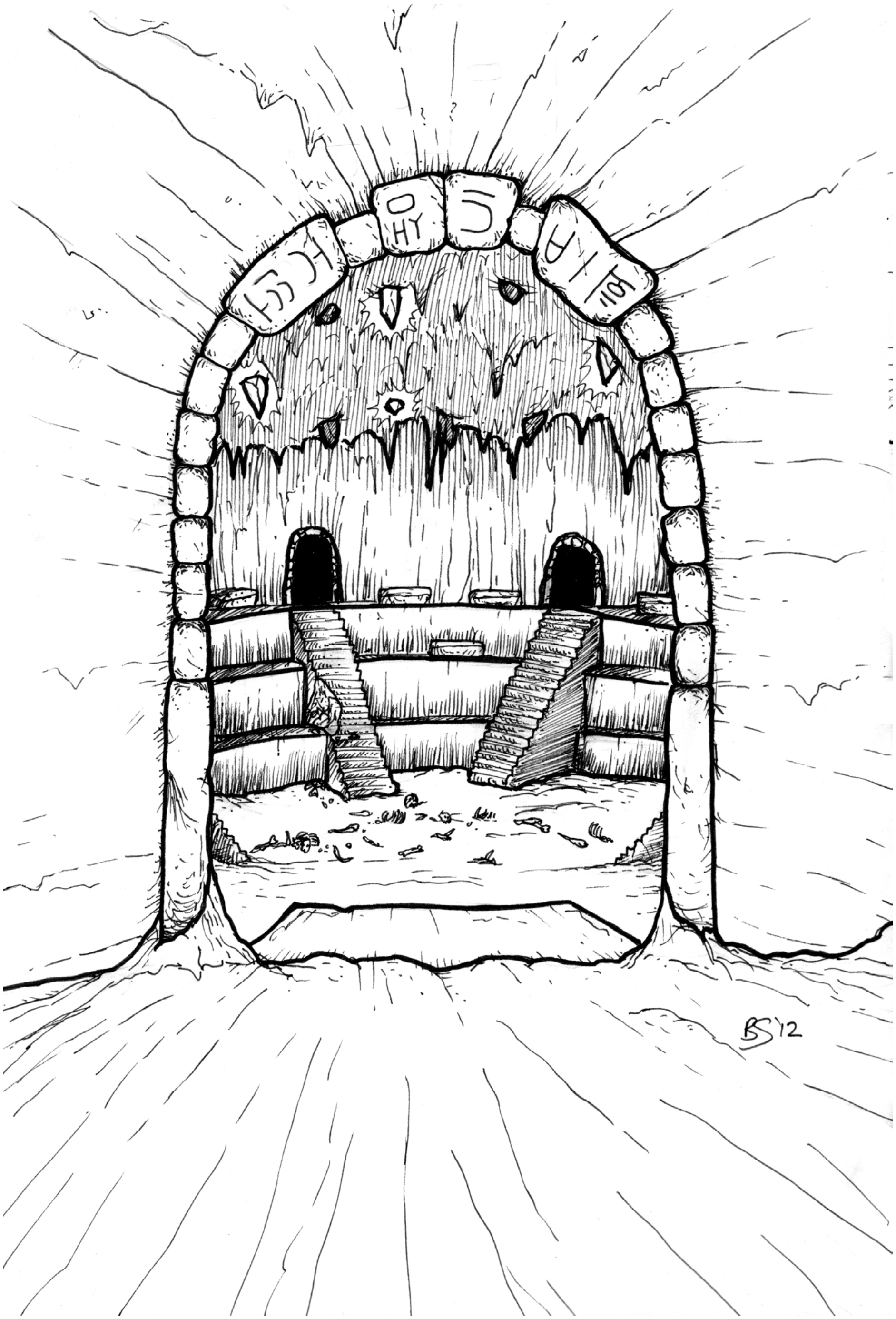
A golden shaft of sunlight enters through the hole in the roof, falling upon the plinth and refracting through it to cast a small spot of light on the cavern wall beyond. Denati races across the floor to touch the place indicated, and a section of the wall slides smoothly to one side, revealing a third tunnel opening.

“Remarkable engineering,” gasps the old man. Turning back to you, he urges, “Now, come on. I don’t know how long this will stay open, or if it will work again once the sun has moved on.”

You hurry through the mouth of the new passageway, which splits into two a little further on. The turning to the right slopes downwards for around twenty metres before turning left, and the left branch has a gentle incline upwards, bending to the right after twenty-five metres or so. You ask Denati which way to go, and he shrugs. “There aren’t any city plans among the Cyrantian remnants we’ve collected together in Salamonis, so your guess is as good as mine.”

If you want to go right, turn to **146**. If you would rather head left, turn to **25**.

221
The Barbarian’s bare foot kicks apart the burning brands of the fire, scattering them. The flames gutter and die, plunging the cave interior into near-darkness and putting the Shaman at a considerable advantage as he turns his attention to attacking you. Deduct 1 point from his STAMINA, but reduce your Attack Strength by 3 for the next two rounds of combat. After that, unless you have been



Lucky enough to kill your attacker (in which case turn to **14**), you must turn to **94** if you have an iron key, and to **176** if you do not possess such an item.

222

You turn and stare back across the crevasse at Denati, who gapes at you with horrified astonishment. Rapidly pulling off the coil of rope you had slung over your shoulder, you take a firm grasp of one end, and throw the rest to the elderly scholar, yelling at him to tie it around his waist and then jump towards you.

Clearly terrified at the thought of the leap, yet even more afraid of the rapidly approaching pack of beasts, he loops the rope around himself, secures it with a clumsy knot, takes a couple of steps back, and then hurls himself forward. As he throws himself into the air, you pull hard on the rope, giving Denati enough extra impetus that he clears the icy rift and sprawls in the snow beside you.

Seconds later, the leaders of the pack reach the opposite edge of the crevasse, and your heart sinks a little as the first of the Toa-Suo crouches, then pounces towards you. Even as the creature leaps, you pull your sword from its sheath, and swing it to meet your attacker.

TOA-SUO SKILL 6 STAMINA 10

Fight one round of combat against the Toa-Suo. If you win that round, turn to **127**. If you fail to wound your opponent, even if it does not win the Attack Round either, turn to **62**.

223

In response to your question, the Barbarian takes a step back, a frown on his brow. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **60**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **29**.

224

You draw the sword, wondering if its magic is powerful enough to harm the Snow Witch. There is only one way to find out. Bending over the coffin, you position the tip of the flame-shaped blade on the vampiric Witch's chest, then push down, hard. The blade meets with no resistance, going straight through your former oppressor's torso and piercing the base of the coffin. Cracks radiate through the ice, and a sudden burst of white fire consumes the body within, simultaneously vaporising the sword, the heat stinging the palms of your hands. You barely notice the pain in your exultation: the Snow Witch is dead again, and surely there is no way she can return from this destruction. Turn to **49**.

225

You continue along the gently sloping passageway, and gradually become aware that there is some kind of light source up ahead. Proceeding cautiously, you advance until you reach what was once a gateway, though the actual gate is long gone. Running across the top of the gateway is a short inscription in symbols similar to those which adorned the arch leading into the Chamber of the Four Winds.

Beyond the opening you see a massive circular chamber. Directly ahead of the entrance is a flight of worn stone steps leading down to a central space, and to either side of it are terraces, the upper ones bearing stone benches. Scattered across the ground in the middle of the chamber are what look like bones.

"The Arena of Contests!" gasps Denati. "Where Cyrantian gladiators fought to earn the favour of their god. And their patrons."

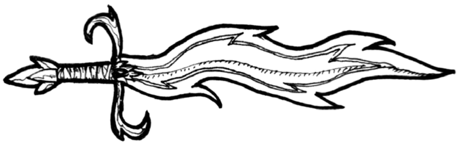
You ask if that's what the carvings above the entrance say, and he shakes his head. "No, anyone who knows anything about Cyrantis knows about the Arena. That's just a warning."

Biting back a criticism of his misguided priorities, you ask the scholar what the warning says.

"Oh, nothing to worry about nowadays. The seating up here must have been a gambling enclosure, and only people who had something to bet were allowed through. Hence the notice, 'Turn back unless you have a disc.' But the guards who'd penalise anyone who tried to sneak in here without the wherewithal have been dead for hundreds of years.

"If I've correctly understood what the Carsepolis remnants have to say about here, we need to go through the gladiatorial dwellings, which should be accessible from the central arena. After you..."

You step through the gateway, passing under the graven warning. If you do possess a disc, turn to **259**. If you have not acquired any in the course of your travels, turn to **38**.



226

For several minutes Colpas badgers you with unnecessary questions, but then something catches his eye, and his manner changes.

"Is that blood on your boot?" he asks.

Glancing down, you see that there is indeed a splash of dried blood on the side of your left boot. You must have stepped in the puddle of Reniso's blood while you were getting the paper out of his mouth.

"I think you've got some explaining to do," gloats Colpas, ringing a bell to attract the attention of more wardens. Turn to **121**.

227

You tell Denati what you believe the answer to be, and he presses at two of the symbols that run down the edge of the coffin lid. A hollow wail issues from within the sarcophagus, and the scholar backs away, seeking shelter behind you.

"I pressed the number you told me," he protests. "You must have got it wrong."

An ethereally gleaming figure, roughly humanoid in appearance, drifts through the stone slab covering the coffin and begins to glide before you. Your 'reward' is evidently the opportunity to do battle with the spirit of the gladiator whose tomb you failed to open. If you have the Flame Sword, turn to **248**. If you have not acquired this weapon, turn to **189**.

228

Unexpectedly, a pained expression appears on the Dragon's face, and the creature thrashes its head around, no longer interested in you.

Denati's voice rings out behind you. "Head for the daylit passage! Quickly! Before the effect wears off."

Though curious as to the nature of the 'effect', you realise that now is not the time to be asking questions, and hurry towards the daylit exit from the cavern, keeping as far away from the distressed Dragon as you can, so as not to be injured by its frenzied movements. Denati almost matches your pace, and before long the two of you are scrambling up the passage towards the open air.

Once you are outside and have caught your breath, you ask the sage what he did to the Dragon, and he chuckles. "Oh, I've learned a few useful things in all my years of study. It's not a trick you'd be able to copy, though, so there's little point in my explaining. Just be thankful that I knew what to do, as it looked as if you were way out of your depth there."

You cannot deny that, without his assistance, you would have been in a lot of trouble, but are nevertheless a little disappointed that he will not reveal the trick to you. Seeing your downcast expression, your companion reaches into another pocket inside his cape and passes you a small stone flask. "This should take away the chill from the Dragon's breath. Just take a sip, though. It's powerful stuff."

A mouthful of the strong spirit held within the flask sends a wave of warmth tingling through your body. Restore 2 STAMINA points.

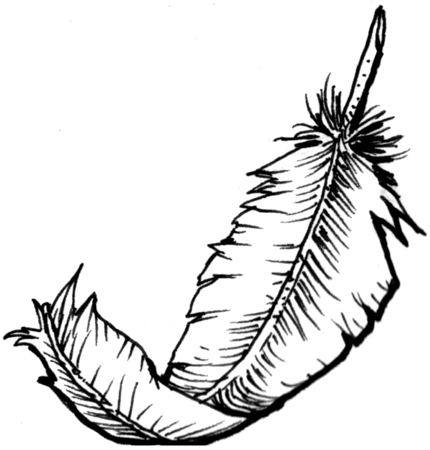
Taking back the flask, the old man comments, "I would hope that the Dragon has the sense not to come after us after that shock I gave it, but just in case it's vengeful or hungry enough to risk more of the same, I think we should be on our way."

You agree and, consulting your compass, begin to head to the north once more. Turn to **87**.

229

As you start to make one end of the rope secure, Denati asks you what you are doing. You explain your intent, and he shakes his head. "It can be dangerous taking god-gifted items from their rightful owners, even after death. Besides, that Owl may have had a mate, and if it should turn up while you're dangling on a rope, I doubt that either of us would have much chance of survival. And we were only coming this way to make up the time we'd lost anyway. Clambering down there and up again will just waste what time we've saved."

You do not have the stomach for an argument right now. With a sigh, you take back the rope and begin to move along the ledge once more. Turn to **40**.



230

You half expect the Snow Witch to open her eyes at the last moment, to move with inhuman speed to grasp your wrist and halt the descent of the icicle before its sharp tip can touch her, but she remains immobile as you bury your icy blade in her chest.

"It is done!" cries Denati.

Without warning, a freezing cold wave of energy erupts from within the coffin, knocking you off your feet. Roll five dice. If the total is equal to or lower than your STAMINA score, turn to 5. If it exceeds your current STAMINA, turn to **104**.

231

The wind will not allow you to put up a proper tent, so you weigh down the edges of some blankets with the largest movable stones at hand, and huddle under them with Denati. For what seems like hours you crouch there in darkness, unable to light a lantern in case you set your makeshift shelter on fire, listening to the wind howl and feeling the weight of the snow on top of you increase. By the time the storm has passed, you are stiff and cramped, and you must reduce your SKILL by one point until after your next night's sleep.

The bad weather does eventually pass, though, and at last you are able to crawl out into the open, shake the snow from the blankets, and resume your journey up the mountain. Turn to **210**.

232

The ice which coats the bracelet also covers the dead Dwarf's arm and will make removing the bracelet difficult. If you decide that it is not worth the effort, return to **162** and pick a different option. If you are determined to try, turn to **173** if you have and wish to use the Flame Sword, and to **86** if you do not possess this item or would prefer not to make use of it here.

233

You wait for a few minutes while the beasts below move past your position and then, once they all have their backs to you, get to your feet. Beside you, Denati does likewise, and the two of you begin to descend the dune. Perhaps you do not move quietly enough, perhaps it is just some caprice of fate, but for whatever reason, one of the Toa-Suo glances back over its shaggy shoulder. Against the white of the snow, it could hardly fail to miss the bright splash of purple that is your companion's cloak, and the furs you wear are little less conspicuous. The Toa-Suo which has spotted you barks something at the rest of the party, and they and their Wolves turn and start to bound across the snow towards you. You and Denati also turn and flee for your lives. Roll four dice. If the total is less than or equal to your STAMINA score, turn to **95**. If it exceeds your STAMINA, turn to **202**.

234

With a loud snap, one of the icicles above you breaks off and plummets towards you. You attempt to dodge out of its way. Roll one die.

If you roll 1 or 6, you fail to evade the falling icicle. Roll again, and lose that many points of STAMINA.
If you roll 2, you leap forwards. Advance one metre into the cavern, and if you have now advanced 25 metres, turn to **172**.
If you roll 3, you dodge a metre to your left, unless you are already at the left wall of the chamber, in which case you cannot avoid the icicle and must lose STAMINA as described above. If you were not at the wall, but your evasive manoeuvre has taken you three metres left of the central path, turn to **201**.
If you roll 4, you jump backwards. Deduct one from the number of metres you have advanced (but note that the total cannot drop below zero).
If you roll 5, you move a metre to your right, unless you are already as far to the right as you can go. Should this be the case, the icicle will hit you, and you must deduct STAMINA as outlined above. If you were not at the rightmost extreme of the cavern, but this move has taken you three metres right of the central path across the cavern, turn to **39**.

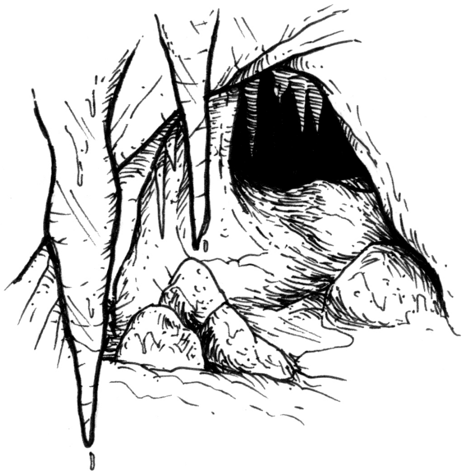
Unless you have been directed to another section, or fatally injured by an icicle, return to **82** and roll again.

235

Your fingers latch onto the edge of the opening in the rock, and you press yourself against the side of the defile to give the running Giant more room. It flashes into your head that Denati has no way of avoiding the oncoming Giant, and you find yourself unable to keep from looking over your shoulder to see the impending calamity.

The terrified old man drops to his knees and falls on his face, and the Giant leaps over him, not even breaking his stride as he continues on down the gorge. The impact of his landing so shakes the ground that you lose your grip, sliding back down to the floor of the defile, but you and your companion have survived this encounter with no harm done, except perhaps to your pride. Add 1 LUCK point.

It then comes to your attention that, though the Giant is now moving away from you, the shaking is not growing any fainter. Quite the opposite, in fact... Turn to **272**.



236

You rummage in your backpack for your tinderbox and, after a couple of tries, manage to create some light in the cave. You are about to check and see how Denati is, when a low but not animalistic growl somewhere behind you reminds you of the noise that briefly took you off your guard during the fight, and you spin round to see what caused it. Turn to **56**.

237

The fountain must once have functioned normally, but now the water in its basin has frozen solid, and icicles hang down from the central spout. You ask Denati if there are any records of Cyrantis containing a fountain with any special properties, and he answers that he has never heard of anything like that. If you want to try breaking off an icicle and tasting it anyway, turn to **70**. Otherwise, you may ascend the worn staircase to your right (turn to **136**) or the more intact one to your left (turn to **105**).

238

A little over half way across the bridge, you skid on a slippery patch and overbalance, plunging into the abyss for a terrifying fraction of a second before the rope arrests your fall.

Your sigh of relief is interrupted by your slamming into the wall of the chasm, and once you have recovered from that, you still have to climb back up to where you started. Lose 5 STAMINA points.

Assuming you survive, your second attempt at crossing the bridge goes better. Once you are safely on the other side, you untie the rope for Denati to use, and though the experience of walking over the bridge is clearly distressing to him, he manages it all right. After a brief pause to recover from the ordeal and undo the rope (which you will now have to abandon), he is ready to move on, so you set off once more. Turn to **175**.

239

You manage to dodge out of the way of the initial attack, but the Stag is also light on its feet, and avoids going over the ridge. Turning, it goes for you again, but this time you are ready for its attack, and in addition to evading its charge, you strike a blow, damaging its antlers. At this, the Stag changes its tactics in favour of close combat.

STAG SKILL 8 STAMINA 14

If you manage to bring the Stag's STAMINA to 6 or below, roll one die at the start of every subsequent Attack Round. If you roll equal to or higher than the Stag's remaining STAMINA, the Stag decides not to fight on, and turns to flee. You may inflict one last wound on it as it bolts, if you wish. If you kill the Stag, turn to **174**. If it gets away, you help Denati up over the edge of the ridge and continue on up the mountain. Turn to **210**.

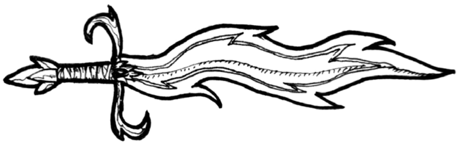
240

This shrine was constructed centuries ago. While it is not completely impossible that the key which fits the lock should have lasted hundreds of years without rusting, and come into the possession of a Giant you just happened to encounter further down the mountain, it is far from probable – and, indeed, proves not to be the case. The key is too wide for the hole, and your attempts to fit it in merely make you look foolish. Lose 1 LUCK point. As there is nothing else you can do here, you might as well continue along the passageway. Turn to **17**.

241

Without warning the skeletal monstrosity before you disintegrates into a chaotic jumble of bone in front of you, and you find some of your wounds knitting together. Restore half the STAMINA points you lost in this fight (in the unlikely event that this leaves your STAMINA below zero, restore it to 1 instead).

Confused, you turn to Denati, and show him a rapidly healing gash on your hand. He appears surprised for a moment, and then something occurs to him. "Of course, the battles fought here were very rarely to the death – at least until the later days of the Cyrantian decline. And those who fought bravely but not well did receive minor prizes for their participation." He chuckles. "With the Cyrantians gone, their god must have decided to reward you himself."



You do not share his amusement, and find scant consolation in the fact that the whim of an all-but-forgotten god has turned what could have been a lethal encounter into a merely harmful one. Not wanting to tarry here, in case he decides he wants to see a rematch, you move towards the battered gates that lead out of the arena. Turn to **13**.

242

Reaching up, you grab an icicle, but only manage to break off part of it, and what you do get is too short and thin to be of any use. On your second attempt you aim higher, going for the base of the icicle, and while you manage to acquire a suitable weapon this time, you strain yourself in the process (lose 2 STAMINA points). Wincing, you hurry back to the coffin before the warmth of your hand can melt the icicle and make it necessary to try a third time.

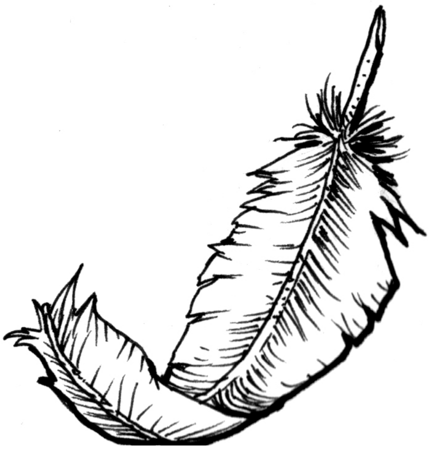
Denati has not been idle while you have been exerting yourself. Elaborate hinges of ice hold the coffin lid in place on one side, so he has had to raise it rather than pushing it off, but the outcome is the same: the Snow Witch lies unprotected before you. Remembering all that you suffered under her previous rule, the murder of Reniso, and the numerous hardships you have had to endure on account of her refusal to accept defeat, you bring the sharp tip of the icicle stabbing down towards her heart. Turn to **230**.

243

A short distance along, you find evidence that others have been here before. Lying on the ground is a crumpled piece of parchment with faint markings on it. You show it to Denati, who cannot decipher the faded symbols, but thinks that they might be Dwarvish script.

Carefully folding and pocketing the parchment for further examination in better conditions, you continue along the passage, which bends sharply to the left. Rounding the corner, you are startled to see the face of a large Silver Dragon directly in front of you. The Dragon appears equally surprised, and recoils slightly, and on the far side of the cavern it inhabits you glimpse a passage leading onwards, with a hint of daylight showing at the end.

If you want to attack the Dragon, turn to **35**. If you would rather hurry back the way you came while the creature is still taken aback, *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **161**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **139**.



244

One of your hands closes on a large stone, which is held firmly enough by the frozen snow beneath the surface to serve as an anchor, enabling you to drag your legs up over the edge of the crevasse. Despite the pain and exhaustion running through your body, you force yourself to stand, only too aware that your ordeal is far from over. Turn to **222**.

245

Brushing away some of the snow that covers the body reveals this to be the corpse of an Orc, its battered armour festooned with rusty weapons. Round its neck you can see a metal collar just like the one you were forced to wear when you were last in the Crystal Caves. Memories of that terrible time come flooding back, and you turn away with a grimace, unwilling to face further reminders of your past sufferings.

A frost-rimed hand clutches at your shoulder. Startled, you tear yourself away from the grasp of your unknown assailant and, spinning around, you are horrified to see that it is the long-dead Orc, which has dragged itself up out of the snow and is now lurching towards you, its collar emitting a dull glow. You hurriedly draw a weapon to defend yourself from the Orc Zombie.

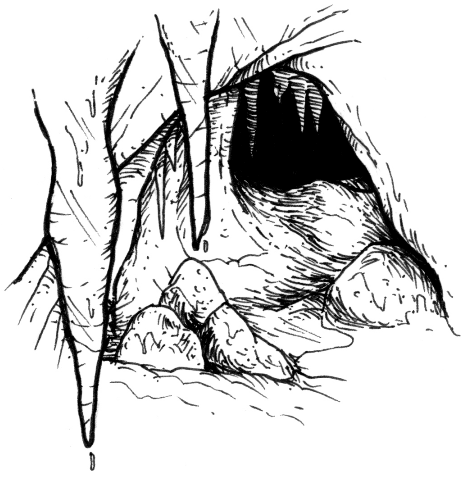
ORC ZOMBIE SKILL 6 STAMINA 6

If you win this fight, turn to **186**.

246

Though practically unscathed, Denati is too shaken up by the fall to stand unassisted, and you have to help him to his feet. Once he is up, he extracts a stone flask from a pocket inside his cape and swigs from it. Wheezing slightly, he comments, “Good thing it wasn’t a glass bottle,” and passes the flask to you. A gulp of the potent liquor inside makes your eyes water, but you do feel better once the slight burning sensation has subsided. Restore 2 STAMINA points.

A quick look around establishes that the passage you are now in turns to the left after just a few metres. Will you go round the corner (turn to 184) or look into the possibility of climbing back up the slope you have just descended (turn to **64**)?



247

A hundred or so metres further up, you catch sight of a loop of wire attached to a metal peg in the ground, and point it out to Denati. He indicates faint impressions in the snow that must have been footprints left by the trapper who set the snare, all but filled in by drifting snow since then. By keeping an eye on this remnant of the trapper’s trail, you are able to spot and avoid a couple more traps as you carry on up the mountain. Turn to **210**.

248

Thankful to have a weapon that can harm supernatural beings such as the one which now confronts you, you pull the Flame Sword from its sheath and swing it at your spectral foe.

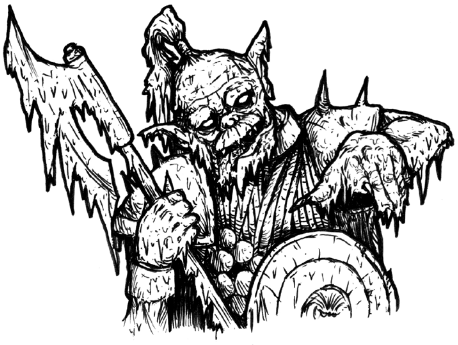
PHANTOM SKILL 12 STAMINA 2

If the Phantom manages to score a blow on you before you can destroy it, do not immediately deduct any STAMINA, but turn to **189**. If you kill it without losing a round, turn to **96**.

249

If you have a Snow Owl’s feather, turn immediately to **216**. If you have drunk from a stone flask, turn at once to **97**. If neither of these apply, Denati observes your determination to cross the chamber, nervously clears his throat, and tells you, “I think I might be able to help here. I own an… item that could probably clear a safe path across for us. Provided that it works as it should. There is a small risk that it could do more harm than good, but that’s highly unlikely.”

If you are willing to let Denati use the item he thinks could be of use, turn to **54**. If you would rather not take the chance of increasing the danger you face, however small the likelihood of doing so, turn to **140**.



250

A huge Snow Owl swoops down towards Nowri, its talons splayed. She recoils from its attack, teetering on the edge of the ledge, which suddenly looks very narrow to you.

You move towards her, but before you can cover the intervening distance, she topples over the side and vanishes from sight with a scream. Furious, you draw your sword and strike at the bird that has probably just killed your new friend.

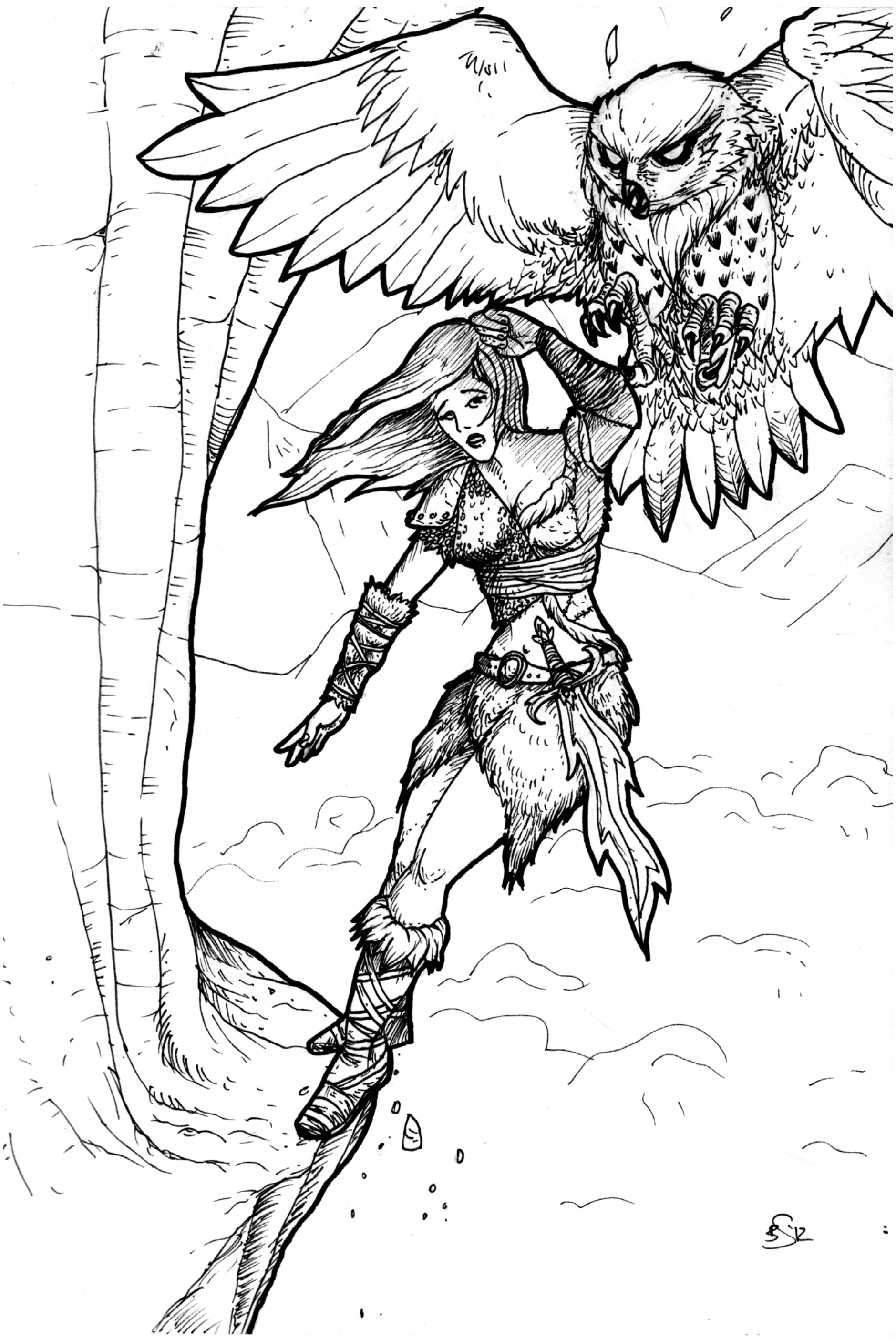
SNOW OWL SKILL 6 STAMINA 11

Owing to the lack of space in which to manoeuvre on the ledge, you must subtract 2 from your Attack Strength for the duration of this fight. If you win, turn to **107**.

251

Despite the Dragon's efforts, your lantern is still alight. You stick an edge of the parchment into its flame, and it immediately catches light. The Dragon flinches away from the flame, and you call to Denati to come quickly – and give you anything he has handy that will burn!

With the help of a few improvised torches you are able to keep the Dragon at bay until the two of you have exited the cavern by the passageway on its far side. You set a small fire there to discourage pursuit, and continue along the tunnel into the open air. Add 1 LUCK point for escaping this hazardous encounter, and resume your northward trek by turning to **87**.



252

It is at this point that you become aware of a problem you had been too intent on your goal to notice before. Prior to reentering the passage, you were repeatedly shifting your position relative to the coffin in order to manoeuvre it into position. For the final stretch, though, you have not had to move your hands at all, and the cold of the ice has subtly crept into your gloves, fingers and palms, all of which are now frozen in place at the end of the coffin. Pressing the sole of one booted foot against the coffin, and praying that that doesn't get stuck as well, you attempt to break free. Roll four dice. If the total is lower than or equal to your current STAMINA, turn to 3. If it exceeds your STAMINA score, turn to **165**.

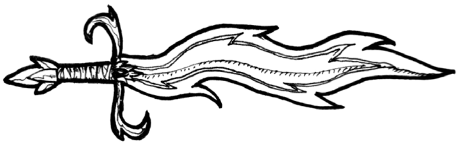
253

You are not careful enough, and momentarily touch the wall of rubbery flesh in front of you. At once you feel as if the very life is being leeched from your body. Roll the dice again, and lose that many STAMINA points. If this does not kill you, you pull away, fearful that the Demon may have been drawing on your strength in order to revive itself, but it appears not to have noticed the contact, and sleeps on. Turn to **219**.

254

The woman curls her upper lip in contempt as you move away. "I thought so. Backing off as soon as you see you can't intimidate me. I should have left you to those animals, you cowardly cur. Get out of my sight before I decide to give you a taste of this."

She plunges the tip of the blade into one of the carcasses at her feet, and you hear a faint sizzling. A wisp of

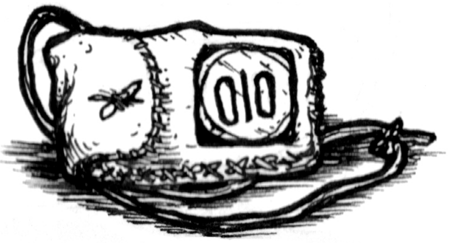


smoke curls up from the body, and the smell of burning flesh makes you gag.

Pausing only to help Denati to his feet, you hurry off along the edge of the crevasse, leaping across and turning north as soon as it narrows sufficiently for the two of you to get across it in safety. At one point you look back over your shoulder to see if the woman has changed her mind and started to chase you, but you see no sign of her. Indeed, you do not glimpse another living creature (apart from your companion) for the rest of the day.

As night approaches, you spot a snow-covered pile of rocks that should provide a little cover, and set up camp next to them. You must now eat a meal, but it will restore STAMINA if you lost any earlier in the day.

You and Denati take it in turns to keep watch during the night, but these precautions prove unnecessary, as the only thing to disturb you is the same old nightmare. Turn to **4**.



255

The Barbarian holds his club in front of his chest, signifying that he is prepared to defend himself if necessary. You do not see any need to fight him, and make no aggressive moves. It occurs to you that if he lives in these mountains, he might be able to tell you something useful. If you want to ask him the best way to the Crystal Caves, turn to **223**. To ask if any other strangers have been up here recently, in case he has seen Denati's killers, turn to **93**. If you would rather not talk to him, and just continue on your way, turn to **210**.

256

You shake the bone die in your fist, then cast it into the concave depression. Roll one die. If you roll a 1 or 2, turn to **111**. If you roll a 3 or 4, turn to **218**. If you roll a 5 or 6, turn to **166**.

257

The bracelet itself is of comparatively recent manufacture – certainly no more than a century old – and consequently holds no interest for the scholar, but the discs are a different matter. “These look like Cyrantian gambling tokens. I suppose someone must have found them down here and decided to use them as ornaments.”

Looking at the shapes etched onto them, he adds, “I believe they're all fairly low in value, at least from the perspective of the original users, but nowadays even these will be worth something to anyone who has an interest in the Cyrantians. I know of a collector in Silverton who would be willing to pay a good price for them.”

If you also found a bone die, turn to **22**. If you only acquired the bracelet, you let Denati get some rest and settle down to keep watch for the first few hours of the night (turn to **112**).

258

Test your Luck, deducting 1 from the number rolled if you did not eat Provisions in the cave. If you are Lucky, turn to **42**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **206**.

259

As you head down the steps, Denati continues to wax enthusiastic about the Arena. “It's truly remarkable how many of the lighting crystals still work after all this time. Up there, see?”

You look up and behold a broken ring of glowing crystals set into the roof of the chamber. In places you can make out a blackened crystal mid-way between two shining ones, and you assume that the larger patches of darkness which break up the circle contain more of the broken crystals.

You are on one of seven stairways leading down to the centre, and at the top of each of the others you can make out an exit to some other part of this long-abandoned city. Perhaps after you have done what you came here to do, you will be able to explore the places to which they lead, and find out what treasures have survived down here over the centuries, but right now you have no time for any such distractions.

“I think we need to go through there.” Denati indicates a pair of studded gates set into the wall of the central arena between the two stairways to your left. One gate sags on a single hinge, and both show signs of considerable wear and tear. A thin layer of white sand crunches underfoot as you cross the arena towards them. Turn to **13**.

260

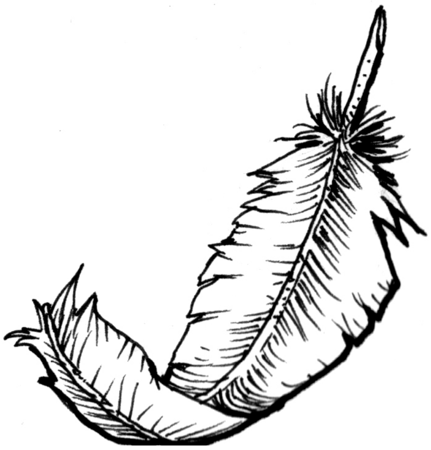
You don't fancy your chances against two enraged Frost Giants at close quarters, and even if you are a good enough fighter to prevail, you could only take them on one at a time, leaving Denati vulnerable to the second one while you deal with the first. Glancing back the way you came, you see that the first Giant's body blocks the pass effectively enough to make retreating difficult, if not impossible. Your only real hope is to seek refuge in the small cave you noticed overhead.

Quickly you give your elderly companion a boost, helping him to reach the cave mouth and pull himself up and through it. Then, with your victim's avengers rapidly bearing down on you, you spring into the air, desperately reaching for the edge of the narrow opening. Roll two dice. If the total is lower than or equal to your SKILL score, turn to **117**. If you roll higher than your SKILL, turn to **57**.

261

At this time of year, bandit raids are common enough that there are always a couple of village wardens on guard at the north gate. While they generally have no good reason to trouble anyone leaving the village, some of the wardens like to exploit what little authority they have to relieve the boredom of guard duty.

You are unfortunate enough to have to deal with one such warden, a lout named Colpas, who once made the mistake of trying to bully you when you were a recent arrival in the village. If you have a balled-up piece of paper, turn to **178**. If not, turn to **26**.

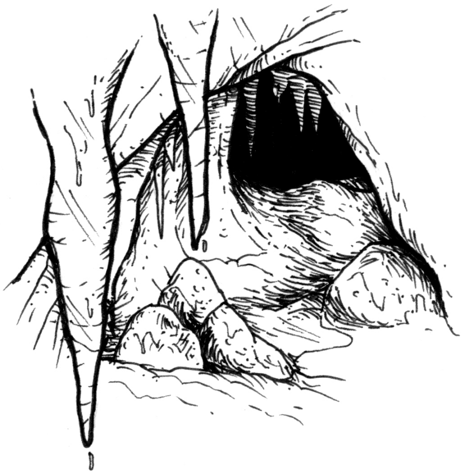


262

Just after you cross the central span of the bridge, your foot hits a slippery patch, causing you to lose your balance and topple sideways over the edge. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **120**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **141**.

263

Slowly reaching over your shoulder into your pack, trying not to startle the Leopard with any sudden moves, you rummage around until you find some food, which you pull out and hold out to the big cat on the rock. Cross off one portion of Provisions from your *Adventure Sheet* and *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, the Leopard accepts your offering and bounds away to eat it, allowing you and Denati to continue up the mountainside in peace (turn to **210**). If you are Unlucky, turn to **53**.



264

Without warning the wind changes direction, taking your scent directly to the sensitive noses of the packs below. Almost as one, the Wolves and Toa-Suo turn to look in your direction, and a moment later they are all racing towards you.

You and Denati scramble to your feet and start to run away, the snarls and howls of your inhuman pursuers ringing in your ears. Roll four dice. If the total is equal to or lower than your STAMINA score, turn to **95**. If it is higher than your STAMINA, turn to **202**.

265

One last dash takes you into the mouth of the passage that leads out of the Chamber of the Four Winds. You pause to catch your breath, and may also eat Provisions if you were injured while crossing the cavern or started the day at less than full STAMINA.

Once you set off again, you soon notice that this passage slopes downwards. After about fifty metres you reach what was once a T-junction, but at some point the roof of the tunnel directly ahead has collapsed, so you must turn right. Turn to **225**.

266

The only thing injured in the fall is your dignity, but you realise that you could have seriously hurt yourself if you had fallen badly. Worse yet, you might have made enough noise to attract the attention of whatever is storing the bodies that hang from the ceiling in here. All things considered, you would be better off seeking an alternate exit from the cave. Turn to **213**.

267

You leap from the stairs to the ground below, but land badly and twist your ankle (lose 1 SKILL point).

Denati nervously decides to take his chances with the stairs, stepping on every second one, and reaches the top unscathed. You go up the other steps, reflecting that they are probably more worn because most people chose to use them rather than risk getting hurt. Your companion has waited for you, and lets you go ahead of him into the passage leading out. Turn to **15**.

268

The glow of your lantern illuminates something else: a narrow wire running between the two alcoves at about chest height. Suspecting that nothing good will happen if you break it, you indicate it to Denati and then duck beneath it. The scholar follows your example, and you continue to keep an eye out for potential threats as you advance into the unknown. Turn to **15**.

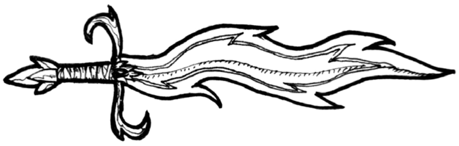
269

The rope will not come free, and you must leave it where it is. You console yourself with the knowledge that it should still be here after you have completed your quest, so getting back out of the caves ought not to be a problem Always assuming you survive to be able to leave, that is... Will you now go over to see what Denati has made of the plinth (turn to **125**), or would you prefer to investigate the snow-covered corpses (turn to **34**)?

270

You manage to bring yourself to a complete stop just before the edge. This close, you can see that the slope does actually continue beyond it, but at a much steeper angle, on which you would have little chance of keeping your footing.

Belatedly, it occurs to you to warn Denati to watch his step, but before you can say a word, a gasp from behind you indicates that he has already slipped. His body slams into the backs of your ankles, pushing you forwards and over the edge. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **89**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **194**.



271

Towards the end of the morning, you catch sight of a mound of stones that cannot have occurred naturally, as together the stones make up a crude approximation of the shape of a man. You indicate it to Denati, who tells you that some of the Barbarian tribes living in the mountain are known to create such structures as shrines to their gods, and to leave offerings of food beside them when they seek the gods' favour.

If you would like to leave an offering of your own, you may cross off a portion of Provisions, or you can take a chance on a different sort of offering by deleting an item from your Equipment List (though you must retain at least one weapon, your rope, your lantern, your winter clothing and your backpack). In either instance, turn to **118**. If you do not wish to leave anything at the shrine, you climb onwards and upwards (turn to **210**).

272

There must be another Frost Giant coming. More than one, in fact, to judge by the way the ground is juddering by now. Aware that you and Denati would have little chance of avoiding yet more of the brutes in this narrow space, and that you have come too far into the defile to be sure of getting back out of it again before the other Giants catch up to you, you opt to take refuge in the overhead cave.

It is too high up for your companion to reach unassisted, so you cup your hands to make a foothold for him, and with this assistance he is able to haul himself up and inside.

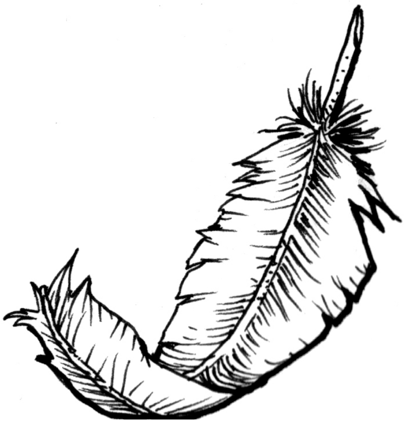
The first of the pursuing Frost Giants appears at the top of the gorge as you prepare to follow the old man, and you leap up and make a grab for the cave mouth before the charging Giant gets too close. Roll two dice. If the total is lower than or equal to your SKILL score, turn to **117**. If it is higher than your current SKILL, turn to **193**.

273

The Dragon's attack has extinguished your lantern, leaving you with no easy way to create a flame, so you must draw a weapon and fight. Worse still, the loss of your light source means that you will have to deduct 2 from your Attack Strength in this battle.

SILVER
DRAGON SKILL 15 STAMINA 22

After three Attack Rounds the Dragon rears up, taking a deep breath. You realise that it is about to exhale another blast of cold air at you, and prepare to dodge. Turn to **228**.



274

You look up from the corpses of your attackers to see how your rescuer is faring against the rest of the pack, and for the first time realise that the warrior is a young woman. The bodies of eight or nine beasts litter the snow around her, and you watch with admiration as she cuts a deep gash in the flank of the last remaining Wolf. You move to join her, and this convinces the few remaining Toa-Suo to abandon their attack and flee back the way they came.

The warrior's sword catches your eye. Its blade is in the shape of a stylised flame. Remembering how easily it sliced through limbs, and noting the relative lack of blood on the snow around its wielder, you realise that it is almost certainly a magical weapon. Perhaps even powerful enough to harm the Snow Witch, should you be unable to prevent her return.

Your rescuer turns to greet you. "You looked like you could do with some help."

Will you invite her to join you in your quest (turn to **160**), would you rather show caution and just thank her for her assistance (turn to **212**), or do you want that sword for yourself (turn to **74**)?

275

At last it is over. Though you failed to prevent the Snow Witch's return, you were able to bring a rapid end to her new life. Her last words echo in your head, a bitter reflection on how long she had waited, only to have her schemes thwarted once more.

Or did they have some other meaning? Might the Snow Witch have been speaking of the future, threatening to come back yet again and seek vengeance for your thwarting of her plans this time? You look back at the coffin, and are perturbed to see that, somehow, the lid has closed, with the remnants of her new body inside. It should not be possible for a mound of fragments to have an expression, but you cannot shake the feeling that the coffin's contents are smirking at you. Worryingly, the lid will not open again, and nothing you can do will so much as scratch the ice.

Troubling questions fill your head as you leave the cavern to return home. Does the Snow Witch still have followers? If so, do they know the secrets of the coffin, or will they be able to find them out? Have you merely delayed her rise? Will there be another hero in a position to oppose her thirty years from now?

You have a strong suspicion that you will not sleep well again for a long, long time.

The Hunt for the Black Whale

PART ONE

by Andrew Wright
Illustrated by Michael Wolmarans

"Call me Yishmaal! I've been sailing the seas of Titan longer than I care to remember. I've sailed the sea of blood, battled the demons of the deep, and survived an island of the undead. But the time I wish to tell you about is far worse than any of those. It concerns the time I joined the ill-fated hunt for the Black Whale..."

INTRODUCTION

The Hunt for the Black Whale is an *Advanced Fighting Fantasy* adventure that starts in Chalannabrad, capital city and major port of the Old World kingdom of Femphrey, though the all the action takes place aboard the whaling ship *Questrel* and in the belly of the Black Whale, an ancient horned Bullwhale of truly gigantic proportions.

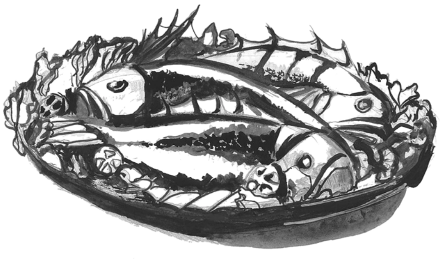
The adventure is designed for 3~6 Heroes with perhaps some adventuring experience already. At least one Wizard and one Priest would be useful to have as members of the adventuring party. Obviously, the adventure has a nautical theme, and Skills such as Swim, Animal Lore, Fishing and Sea Lore will prove possibly essential. In a similar vein, good Wizardry Spells to have include Light, Breathe, and Gills, while Priests who follow Solinthar, Fulkra, Sukh, Pangara or Hydana will all be excellent choices. Lastly, if the Heroes have a decent amount of Gold Pieces that would be helpful (perhaps having just completed another adventure not so long ago...), but not so much gold that they do not wish to immediately go adventuring again!

Note: All opponents with listed combat scores are considered to have an ATTACKS value of 1 unless noted otherwise. In addition, feel free to alter anything and everything about this adventure to customize it for your own gaming group's tastes.

STARTING PLAY

The Heroes are recuperating at a dockside tavern in Chalannabrad, capital of Femphrey. Perhaps they have just completed the *Crown of Kings* campaign adventure (and have since travelled here), or perhaps you've just run them through an *Advanced Fighting Fantasy* version of Jonathan Green's *Stormslayer*. In any case, they are accosted by a mildly inebriated sea captain called Akab (see below for a more detailed description), who spins them the following yarn:

> *'Avast ya swabs! You look a likely bunch of heroes! Have you heard tales of the Black Whale? The biggest Bullwhale of these parts and the scourge of the Eelsea. Let me tell about the times I've encountered the monster...*
>
> *I was just a lad on a barque sailing out of Pollua, with a scurvy crew of Lendlemen – flatlanders, every one of them – when the beast erupted out of the depths of the Eelsea and smashed the ship to pieces. I survived by grabbing on to a broken mast and floating on towards the shore, but almost all the others drowned.*
>
> *Since then, I've heard tales of the beast from time to time, destroying ships and slaughtering crews up and down the western coastline. I saw it one more time when we were hunting for Great Eels near the kelp-forests of Sentinel Rocks, when this thing, this enormous black mountain of blubber rose up out of the weeds and completely obliterated my first ship, my first command! Since then I've sailed far and wide across the Eelsea, seeking to slay the Black Whale, but with no success. Until now...*
>
> *Several weeks back my crew and I helped some Merfolk in a surface battle with some Sea Trolls, and they gifted us with the horn of a Bullwhale, carved and hollowed into a musical instrument. Told me that one blast on the horn would summon my nemesis, so I mounted it on the deck of my new ship, the* Questrel, *and started planning for that day. Unfortunately, my hand has been forced early...*
>
> *A week ago we got news that the Royal Treasure Galleon of Femphrey, travelling incognito under blank sails and with no escort, was destroyed by the Black Whale. The ship was carrying a fortune in jewels and gemstones, all of which, allegedly, now lie in the belly of beast. I have to act now, to slay the whale and get that treasure, and to do that I need great heroes such as yourselves...*
>
> *What say you to joining the hunt for the Black Whale?'*



All of what Captain Akab has told the Heroes is substantially true, and he will offer them a fifty-fifty split in whatever treasure can be recovered from inside the Black Whale. His ship, the *Questrel*, will sail early the next day, which gives the Heroes just enough time to visit the markets and bazaars of Chalannabrad if they wish to purchase any extra equipment. Chalannabrad obviously counts as a city and prices at the market are as per pages 106~108 in the *Advanced Fighting Fantasy* rulebook.

In addition, Heroes can purchase Potions of Underwater Breathing from a member of the Brotherhood of Alchemists called Mendelev Quicksilver. According to *Stormslayer* (paragraph 151), Mendelev is a crazed-looking pseudo-scientist with a scorched robe and soot-smeared face. Each potion costs 7 Gold Pieces and contains one dose only. When drunk, it will allow the imbiber to remain underwater, breathing happily, for a period of one day, before its effects wear off. Unlike the Gills spell, there are no ill-effects for breathing when back above water, so the imbiber can freely switch between the two environments without any problems.

After the Heroes have re-equipped with anything they think they may need, they are ready to set sail on board the *Questrel* the next day. Go to Scene 1 and read onwards from there.

SCENE 1: SAILING ON THE SEA OF GREAT EELS

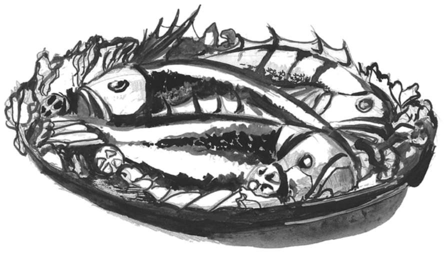
Location

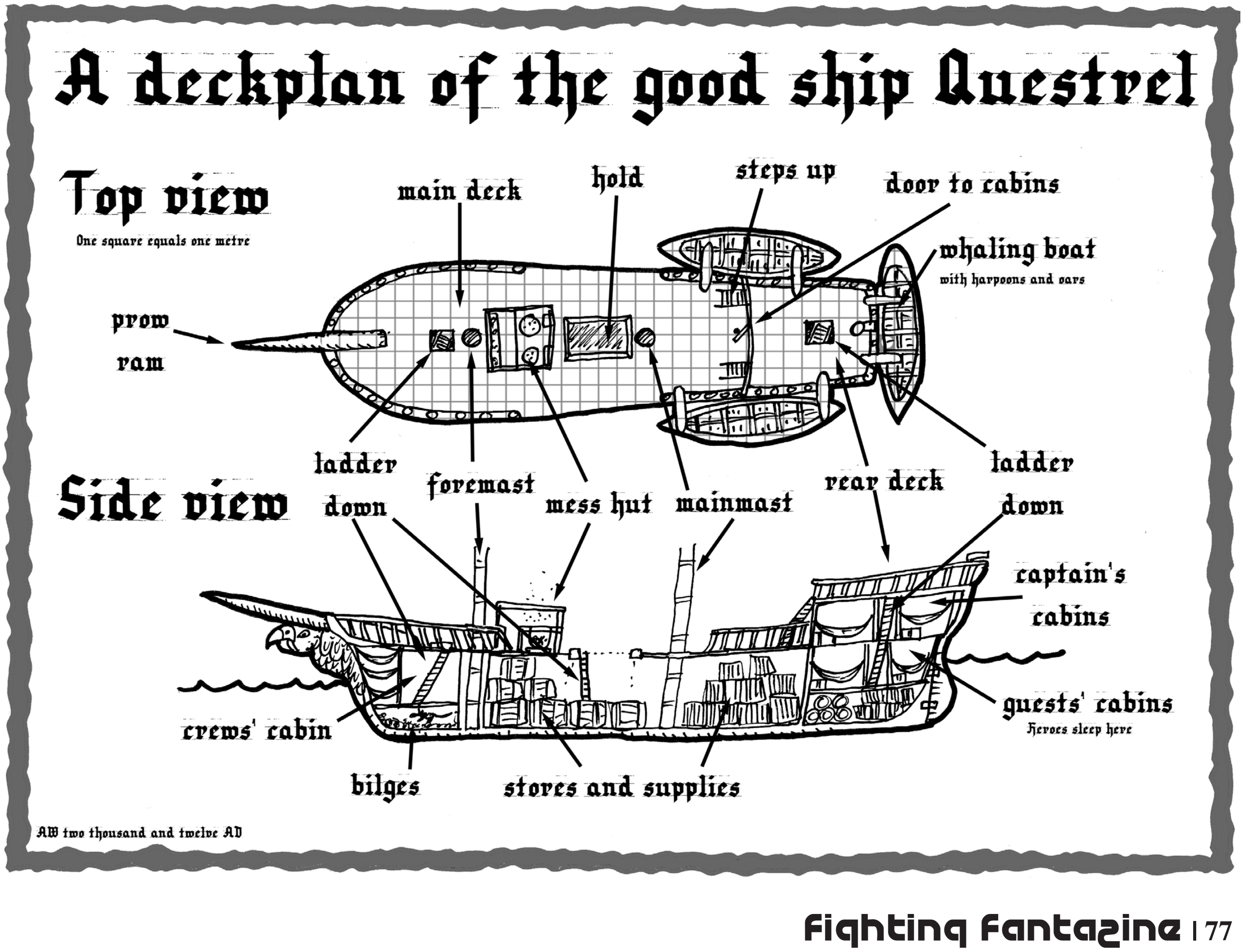
Aboard Captain Akab's whaling ship, the *Questrel* as it sails upon:

> *The strange Eelsea, a mysterious place which takes its name from the Great Eels which live there, though it is also home to Serpents, Sea Dragons, the huge horned Bullwhales, the mythical Decapi (frightening, intelligent, ten-legged creatures found nowhere else on Titan), and worse.*
> – *Titan - The Fighting Fantasy World*, p. 19

The Eelsea is a largely featureless expanse of mist-streaked ocean, though there are patches of thick weeds and kelp-forests, as well as the odd jagged rock that marks the location of an underwater sea mountain (such as the Sentinel Rocks mentioned in Akab's initial tale in the "Starting Play" section).

A deckplan map of the *Questrel* is presented below. The Heroes will largely spend their time on deck, encountering the various menaces that the Eelsea has to offer, in Akab's cabin plotting a strategy to deal with the Black Whale, or in their own cabins, which are below decks in the stern of the *Questrel* and beneath the cabins of Akab and the other senior crew members.

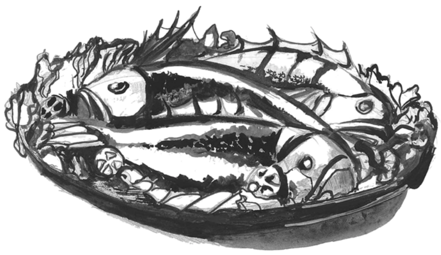



A deckplan of the good ship Questrel
Top view
One square equals one metre
main deck
hold
steps up
door to cabins
whaling boat
with harpoons and oars
prow
ram
ladder
down
foremast
mess hut
mainmast
rear deck
ladder
down
Side view
captain's
cabins
guests' cabins
Heroes sleep here
crews' cabin
bilges
stores and supplies
AW two thousand and twelve AD

Questrel deckplan: © Andrew Wright, 2012

Plot Summary

The Heroes spend up to seven days sailing the Eelsea aboard the *Questrel*. During this time they may talk with the rest of the crew, engage in some fishing from the deck, plan a strategy with Captain Akab to deal with the Black Whale once and for all, and fighting off the various large sea monsters that call this sea of ill-repute home.



Cast List

Not all Skills or equipment are listed, so feel free to add Skills and equipment as you see fit.

Captain Akab: Captain Akab is the grizzled veteran of countless whaling campaigns across the Eelsea. He is tall, with a scarred face and grey beard, while a black tricorn hat sits atop his bald head. His clothes were once of fine quality but are now patched and stitched together. A gleaming cutlass is tucked into a sash around his waist and he wears black leather boots. Akab is melancholic and depressive, particularly after drinking seafarer's grog (of which the *Questrel* has a large supply), and any dinner or extended conversation with him will tend to degenerate into a morose rant on the fickle nature of the sea and its innate capacity for interfering with the lives of honest men such as himself. His abilities are as follows:

CAPTAIN AKAB SKILL 9 STAMINA 16
LUCK 10
Talent: Swashbuckler
Skills: Leadership (3), Sea Lore (3), Dodge (2), Sword (2), Swim (2), Animal Lore (1), Climb (1), Fishing (1), Jump (1)
Weapon: Sword (cutlass)
Armour: None
Equipment: Magical horn of Bullwhale summoning (attached to foredeck of the Questrel).

Yishmaal: Yishmaal is a priest of Hydana who is employed by Akab as both a spiritual and physical healer aboard the *Questrel*. He is a slightly built man with close-cropped brown hair, and he wears faded blue robes. In one hand will invariably be his trident, which he uses in the manner of a walking stick, with its barbed tines embedded in small blocks of cork (these will be removed prior to a battle). Once an optimist by nature, Yishmaal now finds himself unable to leave the *Questrel*, drawn to the gloomy air of impending doom that emanates from Captain Akab. His abilities are as follows:

YISHMAAL SKILL 7 STAMINA 10
LUCK 11 DEVOTION 7
Talent: Holy
Skills: Priestly Magic (3), Sea Lore (2), Second Sight (2), Awareness (1), Healing (1), Polearm (1), Swim (1)
Specific Power: Walk on Water
General Powers: Create Food/Water, Commune, Heal
Weapon: Polearm (trident)
Armour: None
Equipment: Potion of Luck (1 dose).

Nxosa the Spearer: Nxosa is a tall, muscular bearded tribesman from the Isle of Despair (see *Stealer of Souls*). Originally a fisherman, he became a whaler owing to his impressive physique and is now the unofficial champion of the rest of the crew. Whenever Akab or Zung need to enforce an unpopular edict, they will always strive to get Nxosa on their side first. This is usually aided by the fact that Nxosa is a spectacularly bad gambler and often finds himself in debt to Zung after a few sessions of Pinfinger (see below). When not losing his funds to Zung, Nxosa is attempting to save enough to purchase his own ship and sail it back to the Isle of Despair.

NXOSA THE SPEARER SKILL 8 STAMINA 18
LUCK 8
Talent: Strongarm
Skills: Polearm (3), Brawling (2), Strength (2), Animal Lore (1), Climb (1), Dodge (1), Fishing (1), Hunting (1), Jump (1), Sea Lore (1), Swim (1)
Weapon: Polearm (harpoon)
Armour: Leather cuirass

First Mate Zung: Zung is a Sea Nomad from southern Lendleland. Sea Nomads are a short, brown-skinned race who follow migrating shoals of fish up and down the coastline in flotillas of floating raft-houses. He was exiled from his clan for unknown crimes and signed on as Akab's first mate following a tavern brawl in Pollua. Zung is the reigning onboard champion of Pinfinger and establishes his authority through a mixture of accumulated gambling debts owed to him by the crew, plus his ability to fling throwing daggers with unerring accuracy at insubordinate sailors. His abilities are as follows:

FIRST MATE ZUNG SKILL 7 STAMINA 13
LUCK 9
Talent: Lucky
Skills: Con (2), Sleight of Hand (2), Sword (2), Throwing Dagger (2), Bargain (1), Brawling (1), Climb (1), Dodge (1), Jump (1), Swim (1)
Weapon: Sword (cutlass), Throwing Dagger
Armour: None
Equipment: 6 Throwing Daggers on a bandolier.

Vikkle the Cook: Vikkle is a FLAYER (see *Out of the Pit*, p. 52~53) and in charge of food preparation aboard the *Questrel*. When not tending to the mess hut on the foredeck, Vikkle will often be found fishing, looking to catch anything with which to make stew and add some variety to the typical meals of weevil-infested ship's biscuits and watered down grog. Vikkle is a spectacularly bad player of Pinfinger, and is missing some of his facial tentacles as a result. His abilities are as follows:

VIKKLE THE COOK (FLAYER) SKILL 6 STAMINA 7
ATTACKS 3
Skills: Fishing (3), Animal Lore (2), Swim (1)
Weapon: Poisonous barbed tentacles (cause 3 STAMINA points damage per hit)
Armour: None
Equipment: Handful of dried Slumberberries in a pouch (see Advanced Fighting Fantasy, *p. 146).*

The crew of the *Questrel*: The ship's crew, of which there are thirty, double as both sailors and whalers. They are typical seamen from these parts: short, swarthy, with torn clothes and armed with old cutlasses or studded belaying pins. Many are missing various body parts, including, but not limited to, eyes, ears, noses, teeth, fingers, hands, and legs. Their abilities are as follows:

CREW SKILL 6 STAMINA 6
Weapon: Sword (cutlass) or Club (belaying pin)
Armour: None

Action!

The Heroes spend up to seven days aboard the *Questrel* as it sails out into the Eelsea. As well as interacting with the various characters presented above, you can use the "Action!" segments given below in any order you wish to simulate life on deck. Once you have used up all the segments, or simply want to move the action along, turn to the final section, "Scene 7: There He Blows!"

Note: Anyone who rolls a Fumble or double 1 during combat, will, if fighting on deck, fall into the sea on a roll of 5, 7, or 8 on the Fumbles table (see *Advanced Fighting Fantasy*, p. 58). For further information on falling into the sea, consult the "Problems?" section below.

1. Fishing on the Eelsea

> *You see Vikkle the Cook drop a fishing line into the water and lean against the rail, gazing out at a horizon of drifting clouds. There are several other fishing lines at his feet, next to the wooden bucket to hold his catches. Seeing you, he waves at the spare lines with several of his tentacles and mumbles something that sounds like 'Help yourself...'*

If any of the Heroes wish to go fishing it will take almost all day (this is basically all Vikkle does when not cooking food). Any Hero trying to fish must roll two dice and test against either their SKILL score plus their Fishing score if they have that Skill, or their SKILL score minus 2 if not. Success means they get to roll once on the Fishing table below, while failure means they catching either nothing, or something ridiculous (a tiny fish, a length of seaweed, or an old boot)

THE BIG SEA CREATURE TABLE

All of the following will attack whoever hauls them aboard. However, except for the Giant Crab and the Squirting Octopus, they will suffer a -3 penalty to their SKILL score for being out of the water. In addition, and again, except the Giant Crab and Squirting Octopus, they will only survive for as many combat rounds as their initial STAMINA score. Lastly, aside from the Devilfish, which is inedible, they are all worth 1~3 Provisions when cooked.

Roll	Resulting Catch	Notes
1	GROUPER SKILL 8 STAMINA 12 Very Large Bite	This bulky two metre long fish will attempt to bite the closest person with its enormous tooth-studded maw.
2	GIANT CRAB SKILL 7 STAMINA 9 Very Large Claw, Heavy Armour	This giant crustacean is not actually hooked, just attracted to the bait, and will clamber up the line and attack anybody and everybody. It will attempt to *Escape* if its STAMINA is reduced to below 5.
3	BARRACUDA SKILL 6 STAMINA 6 Large Bite, +1 to Damage Roll	This fearsome fish will lunge about with snapping jaws full of razor sharp teeth.
4	HAMMERHEAD SHARK SKILL 7 STAMINA 7 Large Bite, +1 to Damage Roll	Hammerhead Sharks in these parts grow up to two metres long, with their distinctive weird head shape and great flared dorsal fin and tail.
5	SQUIRTING OCTOPUS SKILL 7 STAMINA 9 ATTACKS 3 Tentacles (as per Small Claws)	When first pulled aboard, the Squirting Octopus will live up to its name and squirt gunky blue-black ink at all and sundry. This requires a *Test for Luck* to avoid, and those who are Unlucky will have to reduce their SKILL score by 1 when fighting the creature.
6	DEVILFISH SKILL 8 STAMINA 13 Poisonous Barbed Tail	The Devilfish is a type of large stingray particularly common around the nearby undersea canyon called Devilfish Rift. Its poisonous tail-sting does 3 STAMINA points of damage for every successful hit.

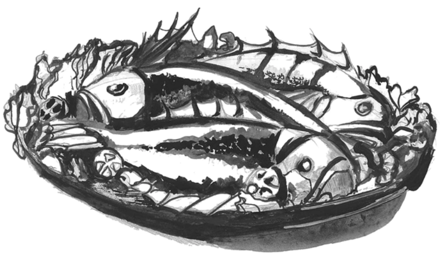
THE SEA MONSTER TABLE

Roll	Result	Notes
1	LEVIATHAN SKILL 10 STAMINA 20 Very Large Bite, Medium Armour, Double Damage	The Leviathan is an enormous sea serpent nearly thirty metres long. It will erupt from the water and attack anyone above deck. If it rolls a double 6 in combat it has swallowed its victim whole. They will take automatically 2 STAMINA points damage per combat round until they are dead or their comrades slay the creature.
2	A pod of 2~7 BULLWHALES SKILL 9 STAMINA 11 Very Large Bite, Medium Armour, Double Damage	The Black Whale is not among the pod of these great horned whales, and they will actually ignore the ship. Captain Akab however will send out all three whaling boats to attack them. Each whaling boat contains 1 harpoonist and 6 rowers. The first boat will have Captain Akab (as harpoonist) and 6 crew, the second will have Nxosa the Spearer and six crew, and the third will have the Heroes, plus any extra crew as needed. Combat is treated as a battle between the harpoonist (armed with several harpoons (as per Polearms in damage and Skill)) and the Bullwhale, and if the Bullwhale rolls a double 6 in combat it has destroyed the boat, casting the harpoonist and crew into the water where they will be attacked by any surviving whales.
3	1~3 GREAT EELS SKILL 9 STAMINA 10 Large Bite, +2 to Damage Roll	These long slithery fish are of course the creatures that give the Eelsea its name. They will rear up out of the water and attack anyone on board.
4	1~2 SEA SERPENTS SKILL 8 STAMINA 14 Large Bite, Light Armour +1 to Damage Roll	Like smaller Leviathans, being just under twenty metres long and much lighter in build (they also cannot swallow their victims whole). They will rise up from the sea and attack anyone on deck.
5	DECAPUS SKILL 10 STAMINA 12 ATTACKS 4 Heavy Armour	The Decapus is a bizarre and intelligent cross between a giant squid and a giant crustacean and found nowhere else on Titan except the Eelsea. This one will clamber up onto the rear of the ship and attack anyone within reach. If it wounds someone, roll on the following table to determine damage: Roll Attack and Damage 1~2 Crushing claws – the creature strikes with one of its snapping pincers, causing 2 STAMINA points damage. 3~5 Tentacle twist – the monster grabs its victim with a rubbery tentacle. The tentacle only inflicts 1 STAMINA point of damage, but for the next combat round the victim must fight with their SKILL reduced by 1 as they fight to free themselves from its clutches. 6 Snapping beak – if the horror already has a hold on a victim with its tentacle it drags the victim towards its beaked mouth and bites down hard; roll one die for the amount of STAMINA points lost by the victim. However, if the monster does not have a victim in its grasp, roll again on the damage roll; if a 6 is rolled again the monster bites its victim as described here.
6	SEA DRAGON SKILL 10 STAMINA 24 ATTACKS 3 Large Claws and Bite, Medium Armour, +1 to Damage Roll	This enormous blue and green scaled behemoth will rise out of the sea and demand treasure. If presented with at least 50 Gold Pieces, it will take them all in its finned claws and depart. If not, it will attack!

much to Vikkle's amusement. If the Hero rolls a double 1, they may make two rolls on the Fishing table, conversely if they roll a double 6, then they have fallen into the Eelsea (see the "Problems?" section below)!

Eelsea Fishing Table

Roll	**Result**
1~4	Catch enough fish to provide 1~4 Provisions (same as dice roll)
5~6	Catch a big sea creature! See the Big Sea Creature table on page 79.



2. Titans of the Deep

The sky is dark and cloudy, the sea is wave-tossed and restless. The mood aboard the ship is poor. 'Something is coming' screams the lookout from above. Hastily, you peer out to the horizon to see a black shape moving through the waters towards the ship. 'Get ready,' says Captain Akab, drawing his own cutlass. 'This is where you earn your keep!'

Roll one die and consult the Sea Monster table on the opposite page to see what nature of beast(s) has attacked the *Questrel*.

There is an excellent chance that the *Questrel* may get damaged in the battle against the sea monster(s). For every creature except the Bullwhales (which will be attacking whaling boats instead), if the combat goes on for at least ten combat rounds then the *Questrel* is partially damaged. If the combat goes on for at least twenty combat rounds, the *Questrel* is badly damaged. See the "Problems?" section below for further details on this.

3. Pinfinger!

During a lull in the weather, a large crowd has gathered on deck watching two crewmembers sitting on either side of an upturned barrel. They take it in turns to stab a dagger between the fingers of one hand as quickly as they can. They are playing Pinfinger!

Suddenly, one of the men gives a scream and blood spurts from his hand: he has sliced his little finger clean off! He leaps from his seat and rushes off to seek first aid. There is much murmuring from the onlookers and money changes hands. The seat by the barrel remains empty and the sailors turn to look at you. 'Care for a game?' says the winning sailor, with a sly smile.

If a Hero wishes to play Pinfinger, the rules are as follows. Each player rolls two dice and adds their SKILL and any points they have for the Dagger, Throwing Dagger or Sleight of Hand Skills. Then they deduct 1 point for the rolling motions of the ship. Whoever has the highest score is the winner and collects 5 Gold Pieces before facing the next challenger. Whoever has the lowest score is the loser, and must roll one die on the Dagger damage table (*Advanced Fighting Fantasy*, p. 60) and suffer the consequences.

Side bets between spectators are allowed, up to and including 10 Gold Pieces. Once a Hero has started playing, they cannot stop until they lose or defeat all the challengers. Of course, if the Heroes clean out all the sailors and/or do not share some of their newfound wealth by 'purchasing' a couple of barrels of seafarer's grog to soften the sailors' losses, mutiny may well be the result (see "Problems?" below). The Pinfinger challengers are as follows:

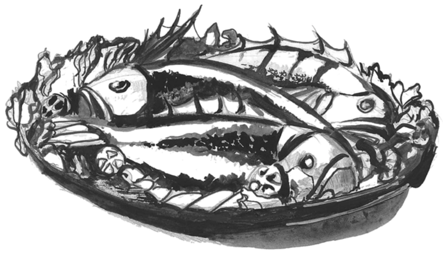
SAILOR SKILL 6
VIKKLE
THE COOK SKILL 6
NXOSA
THE SPEARER SKILL 8
FIRST MATE
ZUNG SKILL 7
Sleight of Hand (2), Throwing Dagger (2)

4. A Castaway

The Questrel *comes alongside a raft made of driftwood lashed together, on which sits a sun-burnt man with wild hair, waving a white flag and croaking hoarsely at you. You can faintly hear him shouting 'Help! Help!'*

Akab will order a rope sent down with a sailor to drag the man aboard. The man is a castaway from the wrecked Royal Treasure Galleon of Femphrey, known as the *Jewel of Mhynnh* that was destroyed by the Black Whale. He will be able to describe both the whale and the attack in some detail and will want to join the crew to help hunt for the beast. If however, he discovers that Akab and the Heroes intend to recover loot from the treasure galleon for personal purposes, he will sabotage the *Questrel* late one night and escape in one of the whaling boats (see "Problems?" below).

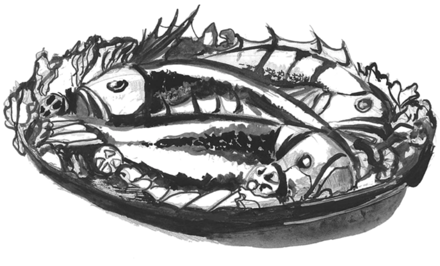
CASTAWAY SKILL 5 STAMINA 5
Dagger



5. A Bird of Prodigious Size

'Land ahoy!' yells the lookout from the crow's nest, and yourselves and the crew stand at the rails to get a glimpse of whatever it could be. Sure enough, through the light fog, you see the jagged spire of a tall grey rock rising majestically from the surface of the Eelsea to tower over the ship. 'Strange,' mutters Akab, consulting his charts. 'There's nothing marked on the map.' 'Look!' says Zung, pointing to the spire's summit. 'What's that up there? It almost looks like a nest...'

Suddenly there is a loud piercing cry like that of an eagle but ten times more intimidating, and a dark *shadow falls over the* Questrel. *'Take cover!' yells Akab, as a Giant Stormbird plummets down on dark-feathered wings, towards the ship, enormous talons outstretched to grab some unfortunate victim!*



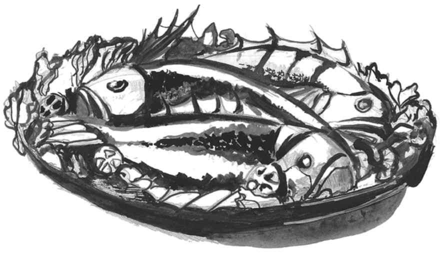
The bird will attack whoever remains on deck, whether that is the Heroes or any others. If it wins its first two combat rounds, it will grab whoever it was attacking and carry them off to its nest atop the rocky islet. If not, it will attack until reduced to half STAMINA and then Escape, flying back to its nest.

GIANT STORMBIRD SKILL 8 STAMINA 12
Very Large Claws

It is possible for the *Questrel* to moor itself at the island, so that the Heroes can either launch a rescue mission to retrieve anyone carried off or to pursue and slay the Giant Stormbird. To climb up to the nest requires three Climb rolls with a -4 modifier to allow for the slope and the slippery surface (see *Advanced Fighting Fantasy*, p. 49).

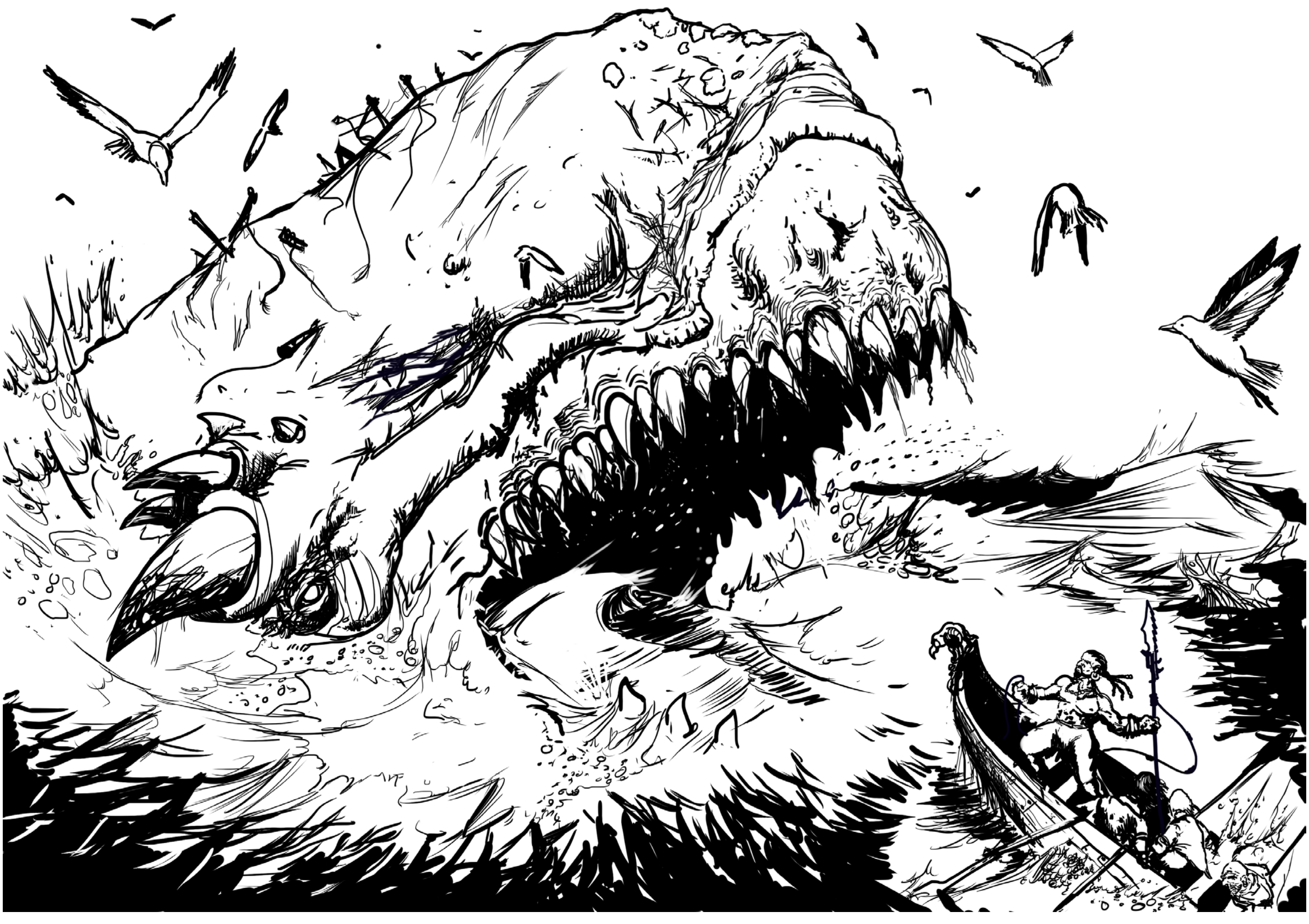
Anyone who makes it to the nest, whether by climbing or being carried there, must battle the Giant Stormbird to the death. In the nest are 3~18 Gold Pieces (roll three dice) among the bones of numerous unfortunate sea-farers, and three Giant Stormbird eggs.

If appropriate care is taken, these eggs will hatch in 1~3 days into STORMBIRD CHICKS (SKILL 4 STAMINA 4 Small Bite). The young will require fresh fish everyday if they are to survive, but can be sold in a large city such as Chalannabrad for up to 100 Gold Pieces each, depending on the Bargaining skill of the seller. Of course, keeping such creatures alive aboard a ship where the sailors simply see the young birds as over-large chickens to be eaten, will prove difficult and may necessitate a guard roster. Mutiny (see "Problems?" below) could be one outcome...



6. Trapped!

You realize that the Questrel *has not been moving for some time. You ask Captain Akab what is happening. He points over the side of the boat where you see that the surface of the Eelsea is carpeted with thick, fibrous yellow-orange kelp fronds. 'We're stuck in these weeds,' he explains, gesturing at some crewmembers who are*

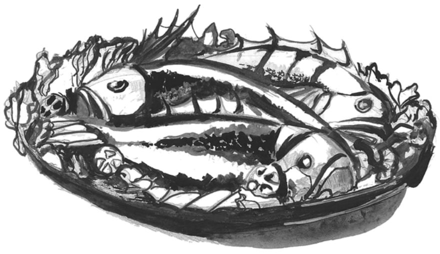


scraping kelp off the hull with long hooked gaffer sticks. 'Hopefully we should be free soon.' 'Captain, sooner is better!' exclaims Zung, pointing at the weeds. Giant yellow Sea Spiders have begun to emerge from beneath the plants and are creeping towards the boat. 'Blast!' says Akab with feeling and looking at you. 'Well, you lot are the heroes! Defend the vessel!'

Roll four dice. This is the number of combat rounds it will take to free the *Questrel* from the weeds and sail away from the kelp-forest. Then roll three dice. This is the number of Sea Spiders attacking the boat.

SEA SPIDER SKILL 6 STAMINA 6
Small Bite, Medium Armour

Thankfully, as anyone with Animal Lore will know, these Sea Spiders are rather smaller than the deep sea kind that lurks on the ocean floor. It is up to the Director whether they play this purely as a narrative battle, with the Heroes and crew fighting off the Sea Spiders until the ship is free, or as a full tactical battle with miniatures and a photocopied and enlarged floorplan of the *Questrel*. Either way is fine!



7. There He Blows!

It is time! Captain Akab steps up to the enormous Bullwhale horn that is mounted to the deck of the Questrel *and sounds out a deep and sonorous note that seems to build in intensity until nearly everyone aboard has to clamp their hands over their ears. Gradually the sound recedes and you scan the horizon for any hint of Akab's nemesis.*

Suddenly, a series of enormous bubbles begin to froth up from below. A gigantic Bullwhale, midnight black in colour and adorned with a bewildering array of spikes, scars and clumps of barnacles seared across its head, rises straight up out of the sea, red eyes gleaming malevolently from deep in its skull. Gnashing tooth-lined jaws together, it moves slowly and deliberately towards the Questrel*, bigger than any sea creature you have ever seen.*

First Mate Zung stands next to you at the rail, his face aghast upon seeing the monster. The only thing he can say is 'We're going to need a bigger boat...'

This is the end of Scene 1. Next is "Scene 2 – In the Belly of the Beast"!

Problems?

See below for any of the following problems that may occur during the course of the voyage.

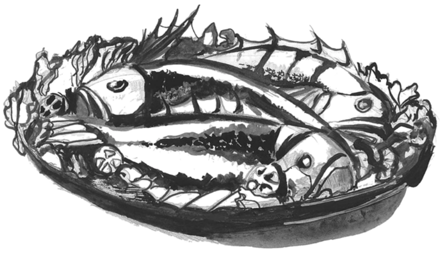
Falling off the boat

Anyone falling into the waters of the Eelsea will have to make a successful Swim test to see if they can keep their heads above water. If not, they will start Drowning (see *Advanced Fighting Fantasy*, p. 50 for rules on Swimming and Drowning). If they can, someone on board can throw them a rope, requiring a successful Skill test to get near the man overboard. Then they need to make a successful Climbing roll to get back aboard (see *Advanced Fighting Fantasy*, p. 49). The main problem however, is that there is a 2 in 6 chance at any given time that 2~7 HAMMERHEAD SHARKS (see "1. Fishing on the Eelsea" above for combat stats) are trailing the vessel and will attack anyone in the water!

Damage to the Questrel

If the *Questrel* is partially damaged, for example, during a battle with a sea monster, it will need to spend a full day being repaired as best as possible. There is a 1 in 6 likelihood during this day that it will attract the further attentions of more sea monsters (refer to "2. Titans of the Deep" above)!

If the *Questrel* is badly damaged, by either sea monsters or the Femphreyean castaway, it will start to list to one side, and begin slowly sinking. Realising that his dream of confronting the Black Whale is at risk, Captain Akab will immediately blow the horn of Bullwhale summoning, (as per "7. There He Blows!" above). There will be a battle to get to the whaling boats, and as they sail away from the *Questrel* to confront the Black Whale, they will be all too aware of their crewmembers slowly drowning behind them...



Mutiny!

If the Heroes have been a bit too high-handed and haughty while aboard the *Questrel*, there may well be a mutiny, with a group of sailors inevitably led by Nxosa the Spearer confronting them and demanding retribution or some form of justice handed down by Captain Akab. The Heroes may like to roleplay their way out of this dicey situation using Leadership or Con Skills if they have them.

Alternatively, you could turn things into a full-scale pitched battle aboard the Questrel between the sailors and the Heroes. At a crucial juncture however, you should allow Captain Akab to reach the horn of Bullwhale summoning and blow it (as per "7. There He Blows!"). What follows could be an interesting three-way battle between the Heroes, the mutineers, and the Black Whale!

Turn To...

In the next issue of *Fighting Fantazine* you will find Scene 2 of this adventure, detailing the epic conclusion to the Hunt for the Black Whale!

FF

THE ADVENTURE GAME

How to Write Your Own *Fighting Fantasy* Gamebook

In the third part of his article on gamebook writing, **Andrew Wright** explains the importance of planning through the almighty power of flowcharts!

Stage Three: The Flowchart

So you've had your amazing idea for the Next Big Gamebook, and you've planned it all out in terms of form and structure – what rules to use, how many paragraphs to write, and what style to incorporate. The next step is to plot the entire gamebook out from start to finish, so you can get an overview of the great and interconnected sum of its parts.

Some people don't do this. Some people prefer to make it up as they go along, and that's fine. We all know there are *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks out there whose writers almost certainly took this approach. If you do follow this path however, I would offer two warnings:

- You're unlikely to finish it. The gamebook community is littered with examples of adventures that were discussed, and possibly even partially written, but never completed. By plotting your gamebook out in detail you are committing time and energy to it, and making it more unlikely you will abandon your efforts and waste all your hard work.

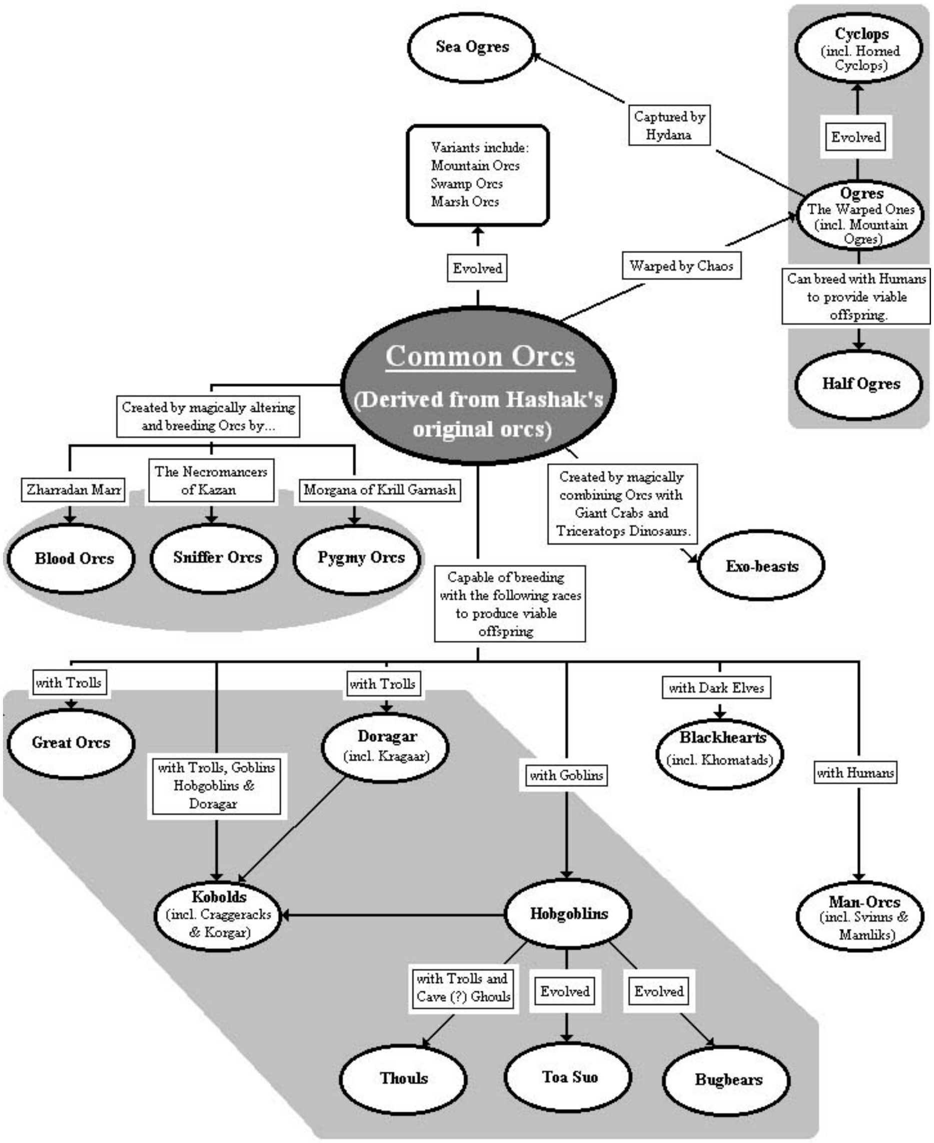

Sea Ogres
Cyclops (incl. Horned Cyclops)
Captured by Hydana
Evolved
Variants include: Mountain Orcs Swamp Orcs Marsh Orcs
Ogres The Warped Ones (incl. Mountain Ogres)
Evolved
Warped by Chaos
Can breed with Humans to provide viable offspring.
Common Orcs
(Derived from Hashak's original orcs)
Half Ogres
Created by magically altering and breeding Orcs by...
Zharradan Marr
The Necromancers of Kazan
Morgana of Krill Garnash
Created by magically combining Orcs with Giant Crabs and Triceratops Dinosaurs.
Blood Orcs
Sniffer Orcs
Pygmy Orcs
Exo-beasts
Capable of breeding with the following races to produce viable offspring
with Trolls
with Trolls
with Dark Elves
Great Orcs
Doragar (incl. Kragaar)
Blackhearts (incl. Khomatads)
with Trolls, Goblins Hobgoblins & Doragar
with Goblins
with Humans
Kobolds (incl. Craggeracks & Korgar)
Hobgoblins
Man-Orcs (incl. Svinns & Mamliks)
with Trolls and Cave (?) Ghouls
Evolved
Evolved
Thouls
Toa Suo
Bugbears

Figure 1 (above): **This shows an example of a non-gamebook flowchart created via MS Paint.** *Figure 2 (opposite)*: **This shows an example of using Microsoft Excel to create a digital flowchart, in this case for Tin Man Games' app** *Siege of the Necromancer* **by Neil Rennison.**

- If you do finish, it's going to need a very tight edit. Writing in an ad hoc fashion means your gamebook will likely sprawl, sag, and stall in places, requiring more effort to prune it into shape. Planning it out in advance will engage your 'auto-editor', who help write better transitions between paragraphs, find interesting uses for your stock of characters, traps, and items, and in short "lay the pipe work" for a thrilling and memorable conclusion.

Assuming you've decided to plot your gamebook out in detail, you now face two choices as to how to flowchart your adventure: digitally, or on paper. I'm going to say a few short words about the digital method, because in this day and age it is definitely a viable option. However, my personal approach is based on using paper, and that's what I'll concentrate on for the remainder of this article.

Digital Flowcharts

The three methods I am currently aware of for using digital flowcharts to plot your gamebook are as follows. If you know of alternative methods then by all means let me know.

MS Paint

I haven't actually used the Paint program that comes bundled with every Windows PC for a gamebook flowchart but I have used it to create flowcharts for plotting the connections between the various races of the *Fighting Fantasy* world of Titan (see *Figure 1*). It's a bit tricky to use and so is probably only appropriate for smaller gamebooks. Other office software is also useable. For example, Neil Rennison of Tin Man Games used Excel to plot out his adventure *Siege of the Necromancer* (see *Figure 2*).

SVG Flowcharts

Simon Osborne developed a method of creating SVG file flowcharts as solutions to a myriad of published gamebooks (see *Figure 3*), and the results can be found here: http://outspaced.fightingfantasy.org/SVG_Flowcharts/main.html

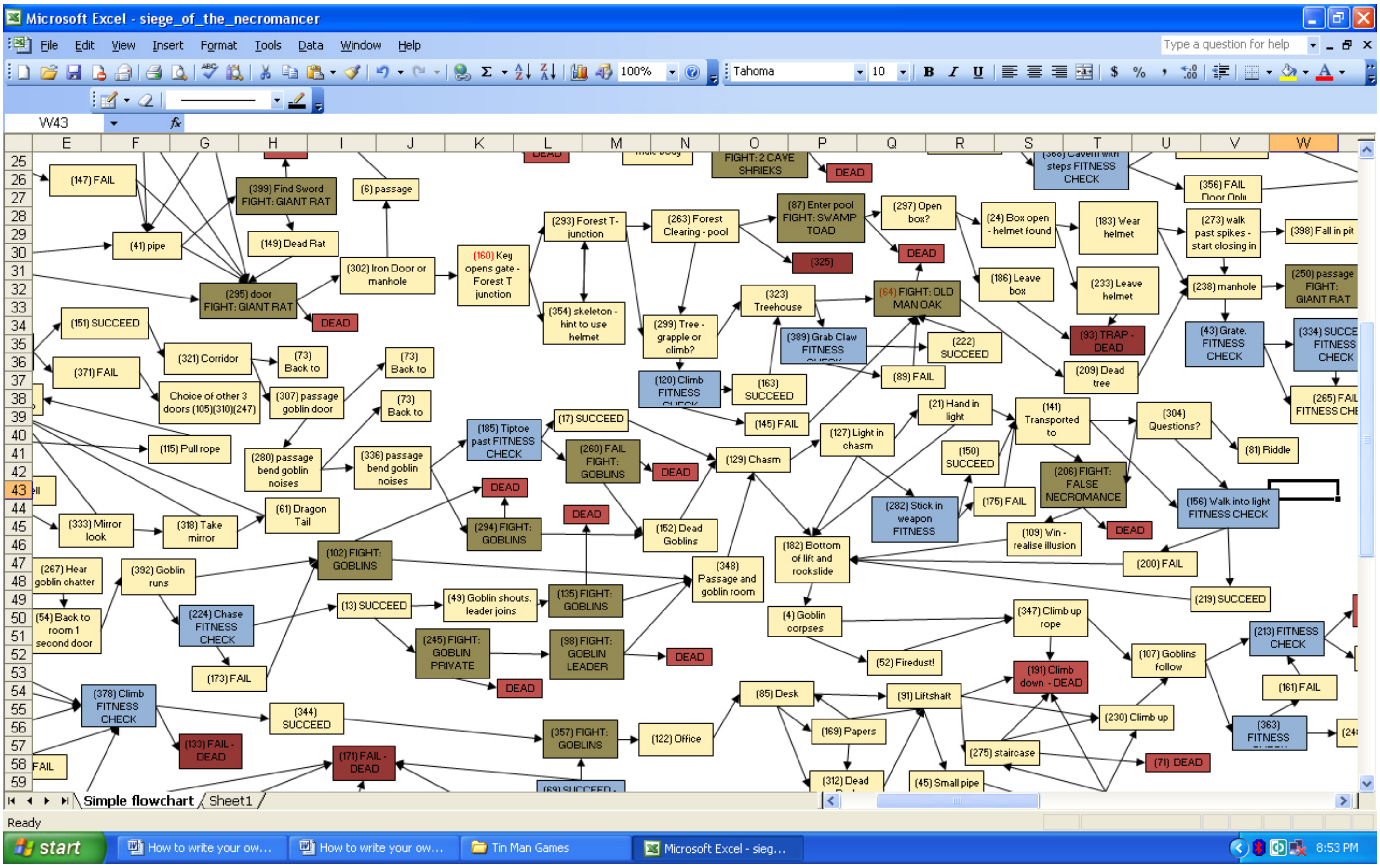
With a little tweaking it would almost certainly be possible to use this method to create flowcharts plotting out your own gamebook adventures.

Advelh

Advelh is a program built to write gamebooks, created by Martin Charbonneau (a.k.a. the Oiseau). It's not quite as completely free and non-linear as using paper and pencil, but if you've got a more linear adventure to write, and can't be bothered with the number-crunching side of things, then Advelh is extremely useful (see *Figure 4*). I wrote two of my adventures using Advelh (*Impudent Peasant!* and *The Black Lobster*) and found it to be an excellent and intuitive example of gamebook-writing software. You can find more info at the French-language site here: http://homepage.mac.com/siyanlis/Xhoromag/Advelh.htm

Paper Flowcharts

If the digital world is not your bag, there is absolutely nothing wrong with the old fallback of pencil and paper. This is what I tend to use most of the time, especially for a lot of the non-linear adventures I find myself writing these days. What follows are a few general pointers on how to flowchart your gamebook effectively, as well as a rough guide to the overall process involved.


Microsoft Excel - siege_of_the_necromancer
File Edit View Insert Format Tools Data Window Help
Type a question for help
100%
Tahoma
10
W43
(147) FAIL
(399) Find Sword FIGHT: GIANT RAT
(6) passage
(41) pipe
(149) Dead Rat
(302) Iron Door or manhole
(160) Key opens gate - Forest T junction
(293) Forest T-junction
(263) Forest Clearing - pool
(87) Enter pool FIGHT: SWAMP TOAD
(297) Open box?
(24) Box open - helmet found
(183) Wear helmet
(273) walk past spikes - start closing in
(398) Fall in pit
(295) door FIGHT: GIANT RAT
DEAD
(151) SUCCEED
(354) skeleton - hint to use helmet
(299) Tree - grapple or climb?
(323) Treehouse
(64) FIGHT: OLD MAN OAK
(186) Leave box
(233) Leave helmet
(238) manhole
(250) passage FIGHT: GIANT RAT
(321) Corridor
(73) Back to
(371) FAIL
(389) Grab Claw FITNESS
(222) SUCCEED
(93) TRAP - DEAD
(43) Grate FITNESS CHECK
(334) SUCCEED FITNESS CHECK
Choice of other 3 doors (105)(310)(247)
(307) passage goblin door
(120) Climb FITNESS
(163) SUCCEED
(89) FAIL
(209) Dead tree
(265) FAIL FITNESS CHE
(21) Hand in light
(141) Transported to
(304) Questions?
(17) SUCCEED
(145) FAIL
(127) Light in chasm
(115) Pull rope
(280) passage bend goblin noises
(336) passage bend goblin noises
(185) Tiptoe past FITNESS CHECK
(260) FAIL FIGHT: GOBLINS
(129) Chasm
(150) SUCCEED
(81) Riddle
(206) FIGHT: FALSE NECROMANCE
(156) Walk into light FITNESS CHECK
(61) Dragon Tail
(282) Stick in weapon FITNESS
(175) FAIL
(333) Mirror look
(318) Take mirror
(294) FIGHT: GOBLINS
(152) Dead Goblins
(109) Win - realise illusion
(102) FIGHT: GOBLINS
(182) Bottom of lift and rockslide
(200) FAIL
(267) Hear goblin chatter
(392) Goblin runs
(348) Passage and goblin room
(219) SUCCEED
(54) Back to room 1 second door
(224) Chase FITNESS CHECK
(13) SUCCEED
(49) Goblin shouts. leader joins
(135) FIGHT: GOBLINS
(4) Goblin corpses
(347) Climb up rope
(213) FITNESS CHECK
(245) FIGHT: GOBLIN PRIVATE
(98) FIGHT: GOBLIN LEADER
(107) Goblins follow
(173) FAIL
(52) Firedust!
(191) Climb down - DEAD
(378) Climb FITNESS CHECK
(344) SUCCEED
(85) Desk
(91) Liftshaft
(161) FAIL
(230) Climb up
(133) FAIL - DEAD
(357) FIGHT: GOBLINS
(122) Office
(169) Papers
(363) FITNESS
(171) FAIL - DEAD
(275) staircase
(71) DEAD
(312) Dead
(45) Small pipe
Simple flowchart
Sheet1
Ready
start
How to write your ow...
How to write your ow...
Tin Man Games
Microsoft Excel - sieg...
8:53 PM

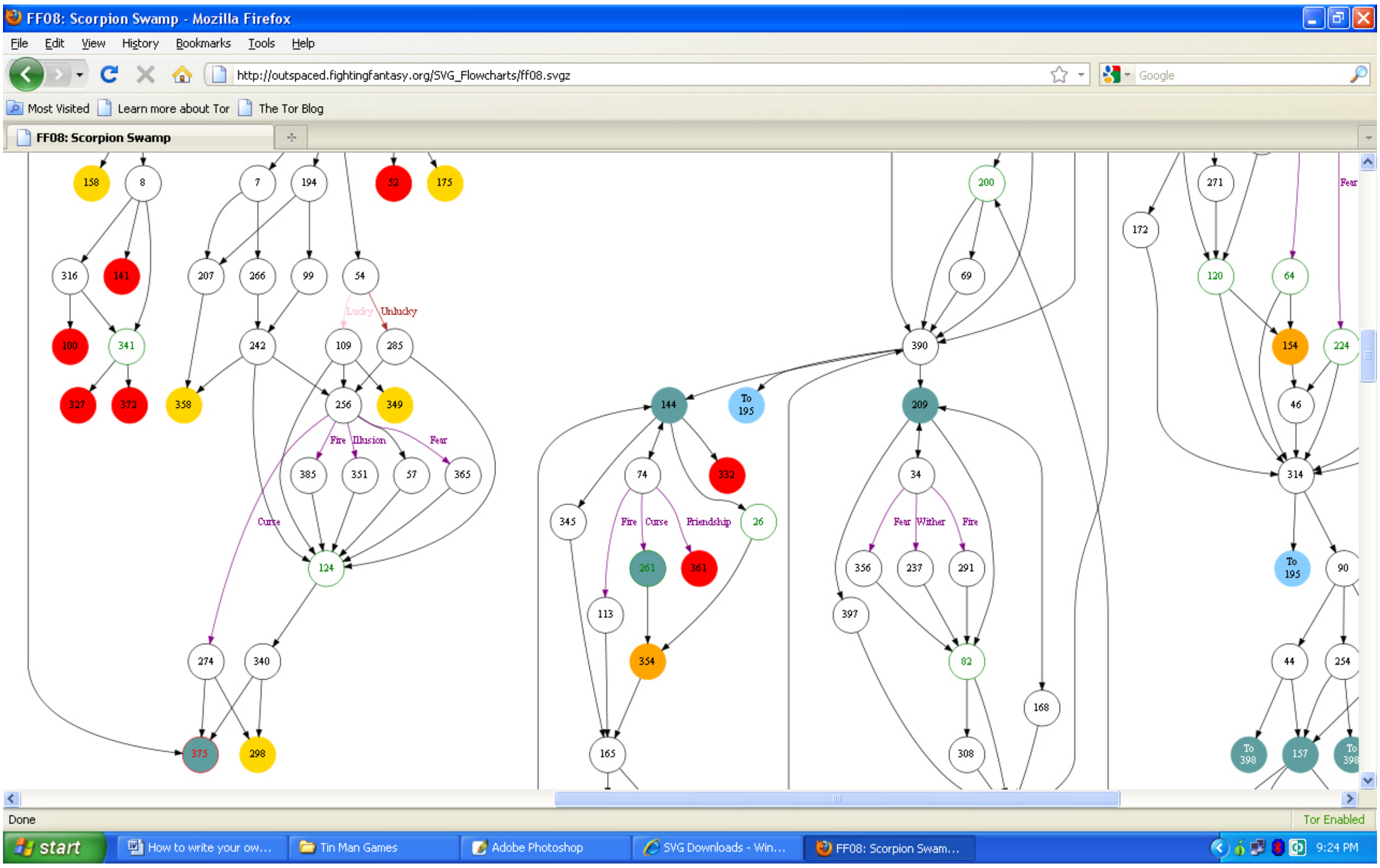
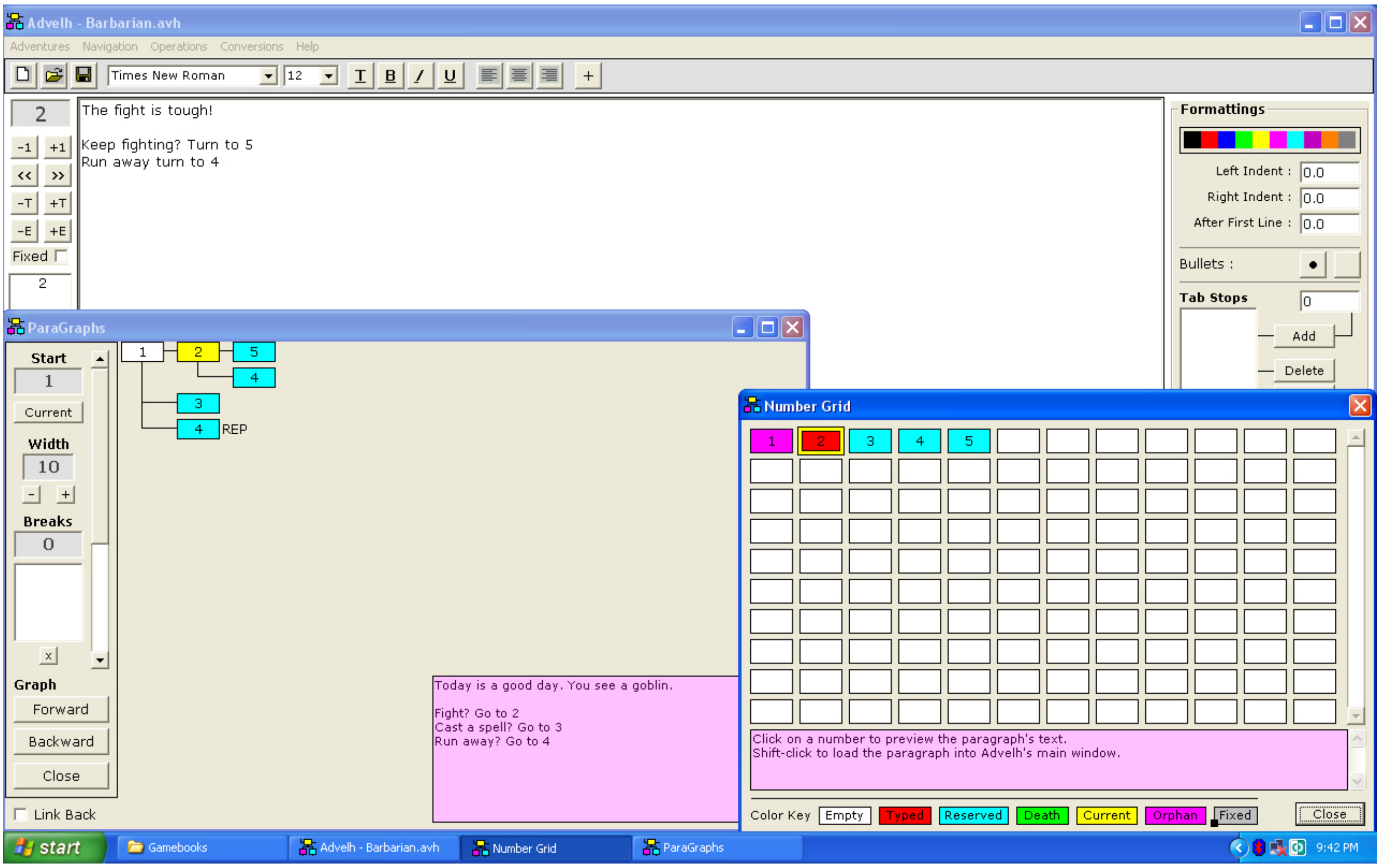

FF08: Scorpion Swamp - Mozilla Firefox
File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help
http://outspaced.fightingfantasy.org/SVG_Flowcharts/ff08.svgz
Most Visited
Learn more about Tor
The Tor Blog
FF08: Scorpion Swamp
Lucky
Unlucky
Fire
Illusion
Fear
Curse
Friendship
Wither
To 195
To 398
Done
Tor Enabled
start
How to write your ow...
Tin Man Games
Adobe Photoshop
SVG Downloads - Win...
FF08: Scorpion Swam...
9:24 PM

Figure 3 (above): **This shows an example of an SVG flowchart by Simon Osborne of** *Scorpion Swamp*, **as viewed in Firefox.** *Figure 4 (below)*: **An example of the ADVELH programme in use, with ParaGraphs and Number Grid views activated.** *Figure 5 (opposite top)*: **An example of a map being used instead of a flowchart. In this case it's Ian Livingstone's own map from the first half of** *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain*. *Figure 6 (opposite bottom)*: **An example of a flowchart used to plot a portion of a gamebook adventure – in this case the city of Venis from Dave Morris'** *Heart of Ice*.


Advelh - Barbarian.avh
Adventures Navigation Operations Conversions Help
Times New Roman
12
-1 +1
<< >>
-T +T
-E +E
Formattings
Bullets :
Tab Stops
Add
Delete
ParaGraphs
Start
Current
Width
Breaks
Graph
Forward
Backward
Close
Link Back
REP
Number Grid
Color Key
Empty
Typed
Reserved
Death
Current
Orphan
Fixed
Close
start
Gamebooks
Advelh - Barbarian.avh
Number Grid
ParaGraphs
9:42 PM

2

The fight is tough!

Keep fighting? Turn to 5
Run away turn to 4

Fixed ☐ 2

Left Indent : 0.0
Right Indent : 0.0
After First Line : 0.0
Tab Stops 0

Start 1
Width 10
Breaks 0

1	2	5
		4
	3	
	4 REP	

1	2	3	4	5

Today is a good day. You see a goblin.

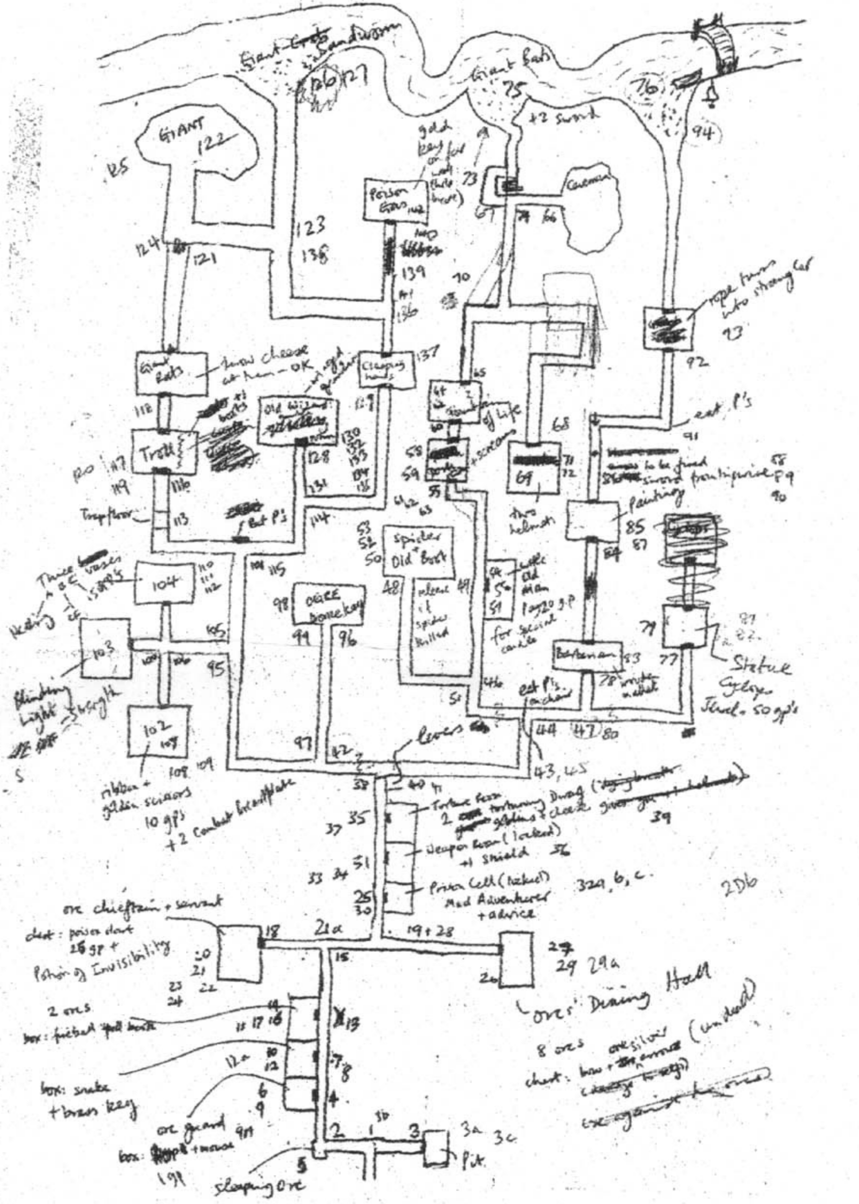
Fight? Go to 2
Cast a spell? Go to 3
Run away? Go to 4

Click on a number to preview the paragraph's text.
Shift-click to load the paragraph into Advelh's main window.

Maps versus Flowcharts

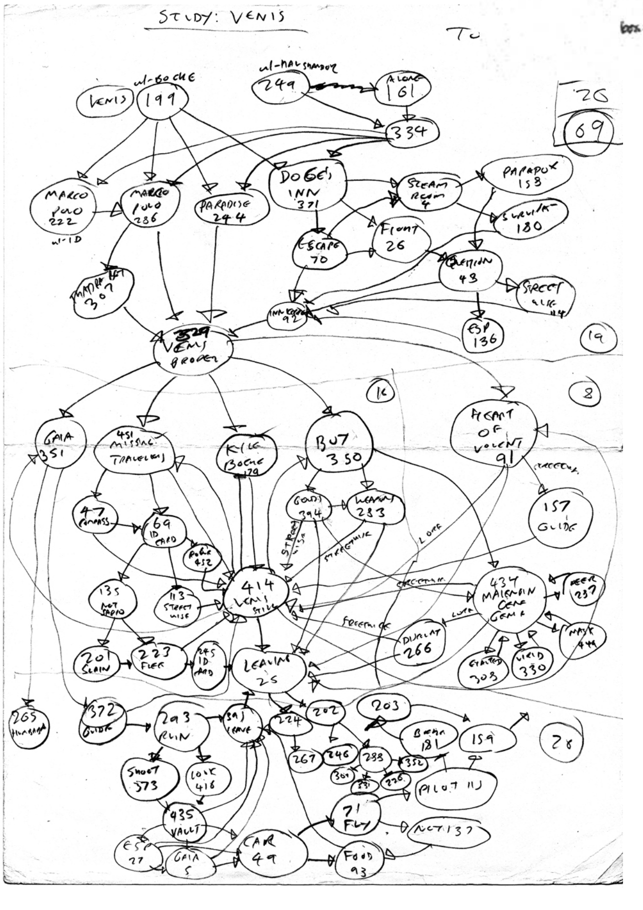
Despite whatever else you may read or hear (such as the mapping article in an early issue of *Warlock* magazine, or Ian Livingstone's own plan for the first half of Zagor's dungeon in the 25th Anniversary Edition of *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* (see *Figure 5*)), there is a big difference between using maps or flowcharts for your gamebook. Maps tends to imply a *Dungeons & Dragons*-style dungeon mapped out on graph paper, with a complicated key or legend showing what is in each room. You don't need to do this!

Flowcharts are much easier to convey information on your gamebook plan, with circles representing areas, rooms, or points of branching choices, and arrowed lines being the choices linking the circles together (see *Figure 6*). It's more time-efficient, not overly cluttered with too much information, and, as a result, easier to read,


Giant Crab
Sandworm
Giant Bats 75
+2 sword
GIANT 122
Poison Gas
Caveman
Giant Bats
Troll
Old Wizard
Spider Old Boot
OGRE Doorkey
Barbarian
Statue Glaze Jewel 50 gp's
Three vases
Blinding Light
ribbon + golden scissors
10 gps
+2 combat breastplate
Torture Room
Weapon Room (locked) +1 shield
Prison Cell (locked) Mad Adventurer +advice
orc chieftain + servant
Potion of Invisibility
'orcs' Dining Hall
Pit
Sleeping Orc

Paper Size

My rough rule of thumb, using flowcharts, is that you can fit 50 sections or paragraphs on one A4 piece of paper, and 100 sections on a single A3 piece of paper. A 400 paragraph adventure, such as one from the *Fighting Fantasy* series, or my own *Catacombs of the Undercity* iPad app for Tin Man Games, takes up 4 sheets of A3 paper (see *Figure 7*).


STUDY: VENIS
VENIS
199
249
161
334
MARCO POLO 222
MARCO POLO 236
PARADISE 244
DOGE'S INN 371
STEAM ROOM 4
PARAPOUX 153
FIGHT 26
ESCAPE 70
43
VENIS BRIDGE
GAIA 351
KILL BOCHE
BUY 350
HEART OF VOLCANI 91
157 GUIDE
414 VENIS SILK
LEAVING 25
DUNLAP 266
201 SLAIN
227 FLEE
RUIN 293
SHOOT 373
935 VAULT
ESP 77
GAIA 5
CAR 49
FOOD 93
71 FLY
PILOT 113

Gamebook Structure

If you know how many sections your gamebook is, and what size paper to use, the next things to consider are depth and volume. Volume, if we recall part 2 of this series, is how many encounters are in your gamebook, while depth is how many choices and consequences for each encounter. So if you're flowcharting a 50 section gamebook on 1 A4 piece of paper, and have planned for five major encounters, each with five choices and results, you're going to block off five main parts of your flowchart each as an encounter, with five choices radiating outwards from them, and connecting or reconnecting with each other.

Gamebook Form

Similarly, and again considering part 2, the style you choose for your gamebook will dictate the shape and appearance of the flowchart. If your gamebook is time-based, each encounter

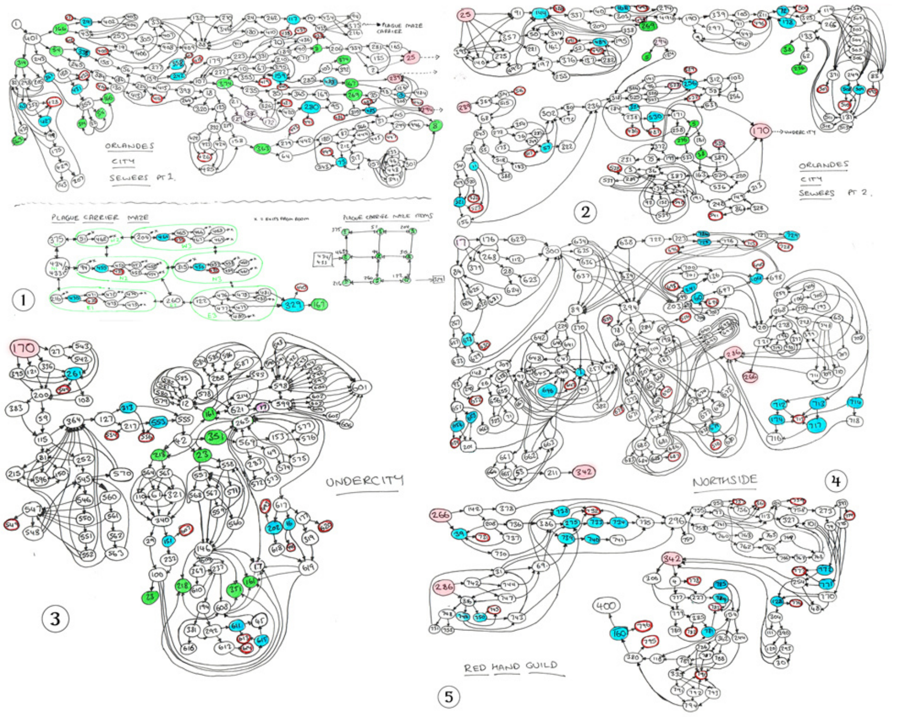
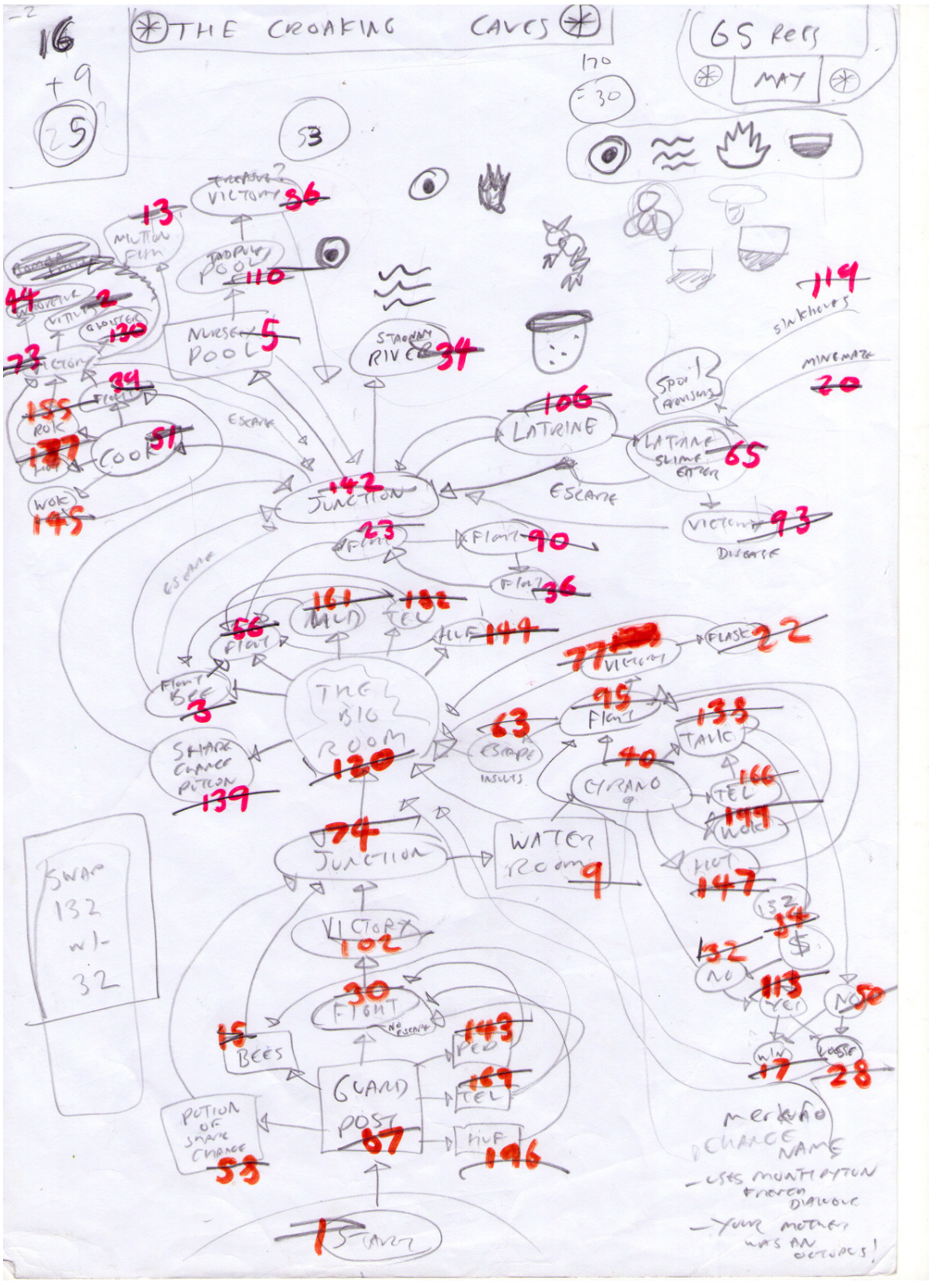

ORLANDES CITY SEWERS PT 1
PLAGUE CARRIER MAZE
ORLANDES CITY SEWERS PT 2
UNDERCITY
NORTHSIDE
RED HAND GUILD
1
2
3
4
5

Figure 7 (left): **The entirety of** *Catacombs of the Undercity* **mapped out via flowchart.**

Figure 8 (below): **An example of a linear flowchart, in this case the Croaking Caves from** *Shrine of the Salamander* **(in** *Fighting Fantazine* **issue 2).**

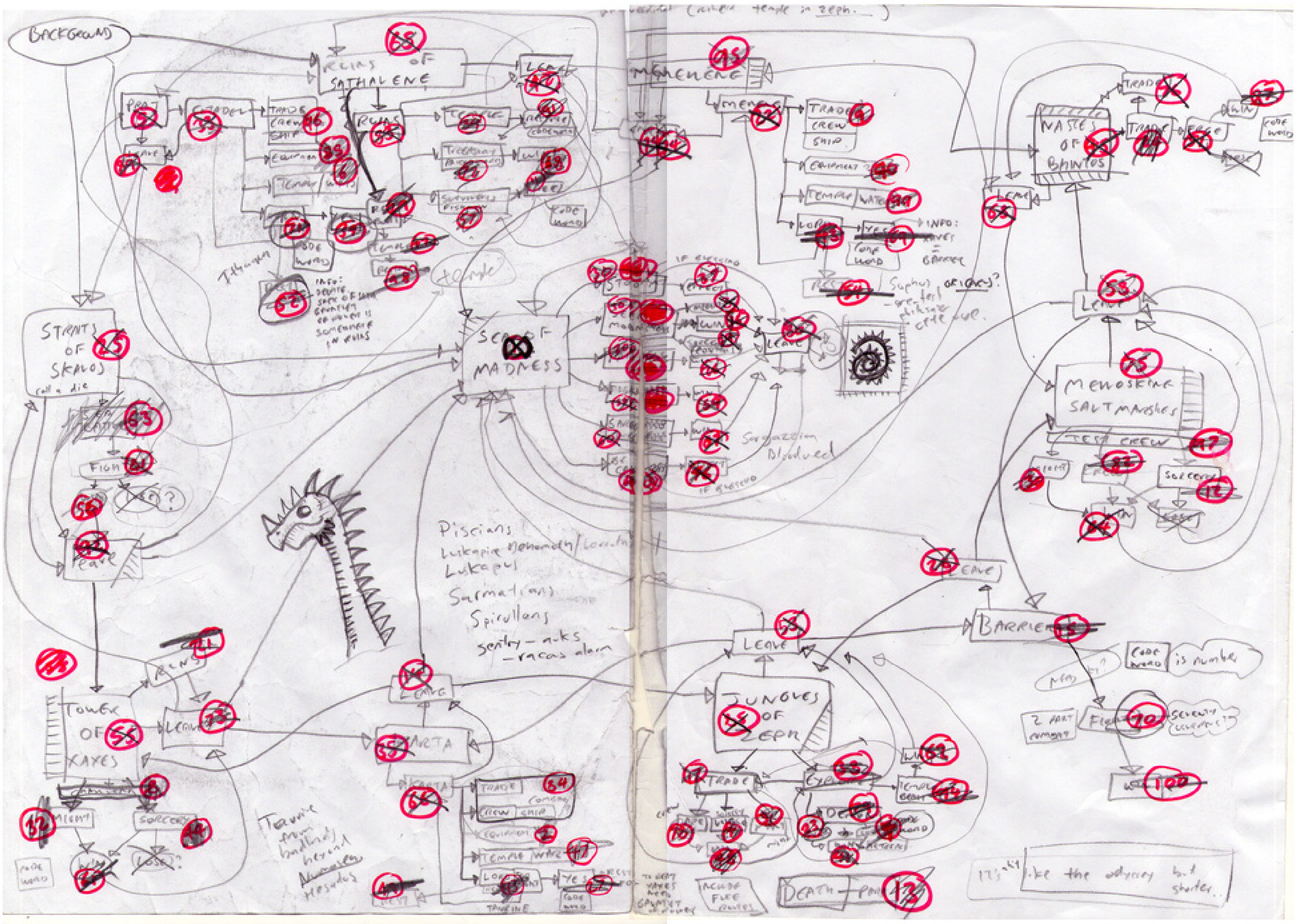
Figure 9 (opposite): **An example of a non-linear flowchart, in this case** *Sea of Madness*, **the 2011 winner of the Windhammer Prize for Short Gamebook Fiction.**

will be a set time frame, such as a day or hour. If it is location-based, each encounter will instead be place to visit. If it is a linear adventure, the flowchart will be tree-like in structure with branching paragraphs, with one 'trunk' if it is one true path, or several if it is multi-path (see *Figure 8*). On the other hand, if it is non-linear, it will probably look more grid-like in shape, as each encounter area connects and reconnects back to those that lie all around it (see *Figure 9*).


THE CROAKING CAVES
65 REFS
MAY
16
+9
25
53
170
-30
VICTORY 36
MUTTON FUN 13
TADPOLE POOL 110
NURSERY POOL 5
STAGNANT RIVER 34
SLAKHIVES 119
MINEMAZE 20
LATRINE 106
LATRINE SLIME EATER 65
ESCAPE
JUNCTION 142
VICTORY 93
FIGHT 23
FIGHT 90
FIGHT 36
COOK 51
WOK 145
MUD 161
TEL 182
FIGHT 66
HUF 149
VICTORY 77
FIGHT 22
FIGHT 95
THE BIG ROOM 120
ESCAPE 63
INSULTS
CYRANO 40
TALK 133
TEL 166
WOK 199
SHARE CHANCE POTION 139
JUNCTION 74
WATER ROOM 9
HUF 147
VICTORY 102
FIGHT 30
NO ESCAPE
BEES 15
PEO 143
GUARD POST 67
TEL 169
HUF 196
POTION OF SHARE CHANCE 53
132 NO
$ 54
113 YES
NO 50
WIN 17
LOSE 28
SWAP 132 w/- 32
merkado CHANCE NAME
- USES MONTY PYTON FRENCH DIALOGUE
- YOUR MOTHER WAS AN OCTOPUS!
START 1

Some Things to Look Out For

- Keep it interesting! Try and avoid sections with only once choice. Offer multiple choices onwards from each section.
- Avoid repetition! If you find yourself flowcharting two separate paths for the same one room, depending on which door the adventurer entered from, perhaps it is time to switch to a non-linear format to avoid duplicating the passages within your gamebook.
- Keep it tight! Especially if you're writing to a strict section limit, feel free to double or triple up section outcomes in one section. Who says you can't describe good or bad results from a Test Your Luck roll in one section rather than splitting it over three?



How to Start

Grab your piece of paper and a pencil. Block down your starting encounter at the top (if your adventurer is heading south) or bottom (if your adventurer is heading north) or side (if east or west) of your page if your gamebook is linear. Add some choices and consequences, and then move on to the next encounter.

If your gamebook is non-linear, block down all the major encounter areas and then show the paths that lead to each one, and the choices that happen there. Often for non-linear encounters, you'll need an entry section, a series of choices sections, and an exit section.

How to Continue

Keep blocking out on paper the various encounters and choices for your adventure. It's a good idea to maintain a running tally of how many sections you've planned, particularly if you're working towards a set limit (such as 200 sections for a *Fighting Fantazine* adventure or 100 sections for a Windhammer Prize entry). If you reach your limit too quickly, you're either going to have to do some cutting or else expand the scope of your adventure!

If it's a big adventure that requires a lot of planning, don't forget to take a break from time to time. You may find during your break time that'll you'll come up with solutions to flowchart areas that may have been giving you some grief. Always leave yourself an easy way back into the flowchart though, as you don't want to lose interest and give up on writing your adventure before it has even begun!

How to End

Once you've finished flowcharting your entire adventure on paper, do a series of double checks on exactly how many sections you've blocked down on paper. Even if you've been keeping a careful tally, you may well find you're slightly over or under your section limit. If you're over the limit you're going to have to cut back or combine some sections. If you're under, you'll have to add a bit more. Try and avoid adding anti-cheat sections, instant deaths or unreachable Easter eggs. They may be amusing but they're really just a waste of space. Instead think of something interesting to add as an extra, such as a place to buy extra equipment, a wandering encounter chart, or an extra choice during a difficult battle.

If you're now happy with the end result, sleep on it for a couple of days and then consider it anew with fresh eyes to see if there's anything that needs a little bit of extra planning or finessing. If not, and everything looks fine, you're reading to embark on the next two exciting and important stages in creating your gamebook adventure: numbering and writing the sections. More on these in an upcoming issue of *Fighting Fantazine*!

The Rise and Fall and Rise of Gamebooks in Germany

WORDS: **Nicolai Bonczyk**
with translation by
Alexander Kühnert

1. The Beginnings

Although gamebooks began to spread in the English-speaking world in the 1970s and had already spawned many successful titles and series by the early 1980s, the gamebook format took its time to catch on in Germany. Despite single titles like *Die Insel der 1000 Gefahren* (*Sugarcane Island*) being pulished in the late 1970s, the actual big break of gamebooks in Germany came not until some years later.

In 1983, the role playing game *Schwerter und Dämonen* (*Tunnels & Trolls*) was published in Germany. This classic pen & paper RPG had a multitude of so-called solo adventures. These adventures were not very complex and written in a simple way, mirroring the gaming style of their time. However, they failed to prove popular among German players and the game did not gain lasting acceptance. After the first original German RPGs were published, such as *Midgard* (1983) and *Das Schwarze Auge* (1984), the days of *Tunnels & Trolls* were numbered.

In 1986, the production of the game was ceased after the publication of a core rule box, one group adventure and three solo adventures.

Games of this kind did not seem to be very popular until one book from England broke with this trend when it was published in Germany in 1983: *Der Hexenmeister vom Flammenden Berg* (*The Warlock of Firetop Mountain*). It was the first book from the *Fighting Fantasy* series which ran under the German name of *FantasyAbenteuerSpielbuch* (Engl.: "Fantasy Adventure Gamebook").

Steve Jackson
Ian Livingstone
Der Hexenmeister vom Flammenden Berg
Thienemann
Steve Jackson · Jan Livingstone
Der Hexenmeister vom Flammenden Berg
G GOLDMANN
STEVE JACKSON/IAN LIVINGSTONE
Der Hexenmeister vom Flammenden Berg
EIN ABENTEUER-SPIELBUCH
Steve Jackson • Ian Livingstone
DER HEXENMEISTER VOM FLAMMENDEN BERG
CARLSEN
EIN FANTASY-SPIELBUCH

Steve Jackson
Die Zitadelle des Zauberers
Ian Livingstone
DER FORST DER FINSTERNIS

Above: Four different covers for the German translation of *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain*, beginning on the left with the original edition and finishing with the 2008 edition. Right: Original covers for (left to right) *The Citadel of Chaos*, *The Forest of Doom*, and *Starship Traveller*.

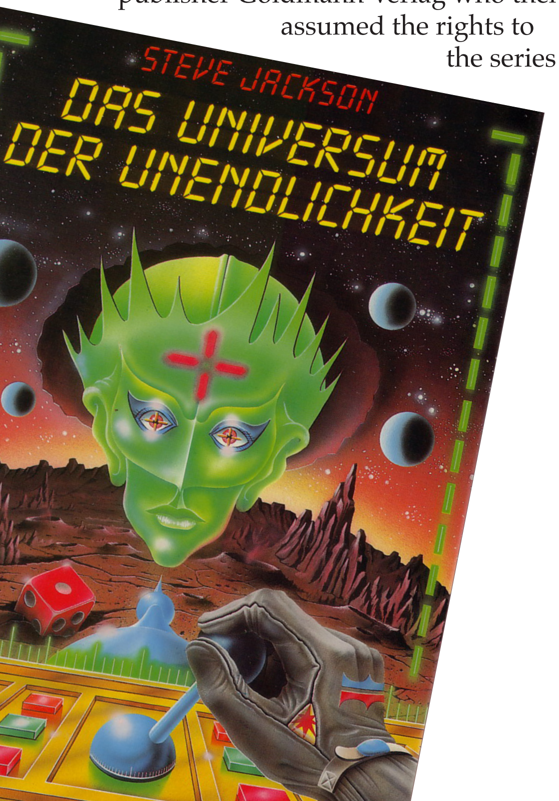
This first 'real' gamebook, penned by Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone, was an instantaneous success, and within a short period of time many more books from this series followed, including the *Analand Saga* (*Sorcery!*) which was extremely popular in Germany and still is among gamebook fans.

2. The Heyday of Gamebooks

With the release of the *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks, the genre experienced its heyday in Germany. Following the commercial success of the series, a multitude of other books and series were published. Not all of them achieved the same level of awareness and popularity as *Fighting Fantasy* but there were some which garnered a very loyal fan base that has survived until today.

Fighting Fantasy remained to be the market leader. The publisher Thieneman – a publisher of kids' books – was the first to pick up the series and lead it to success, although they unfortunately made a mistake which still is very common in Germany. They addressed the books to a very young target audience, replacing the original cover illustrations with more child-oriented covers.

The *Fighting Fantasy* series was cancelled at the end of the 1980s until which point only eighteen books had been released in Germany. The publisher Goldmann Verlag who then assumed the rights to the series after having successfully published other gamebooks only republished sixteen of the books before dropping it during the early 1990s.



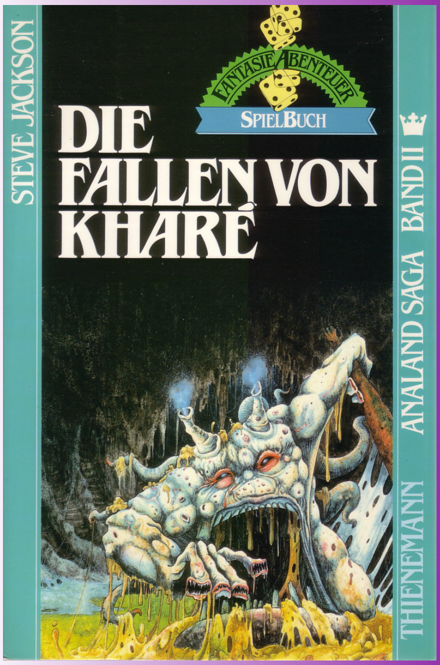
Between 1984 and 1988, a great number of other gamebook series saw the light of day. Most of them came from the UK or the USA where they had been published years before. Some of them, like *Merlins Zeitmaschine* (1985, *Time Machine*), Sherlock *Holmes* (1988, *Sherlock Holmes Solo Mysteries*), and *Abenteuer ohne Ende* (1984, *Endless Quest*), experienced a rather moderate success. Others like *Die Saga von Bruder John* (1987, original French: *La Saga du Prêtre Jean*), the German series *Das große … Spielbuch* (Engl.: *The Big … Gamebook*), and finally *Einsamer Wolf* (1984, *Lone Wolf*), proved very popular and generated a huge fan base.

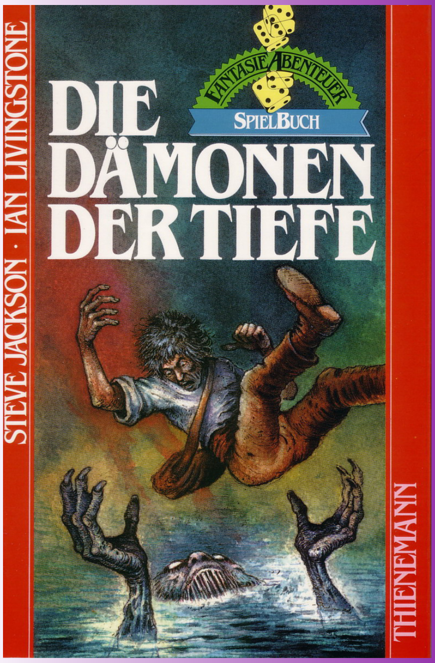
Das große … Spielbuch was one of the few original German series which spawned four really excellent books. They all had a historic setting or a strong tendency to legend and myth. One could fight at the court of King Arthur and prove oneself as Greek or Germanic hero. The fourth book played in the mafia-controlled Chicago of the 1930s. The books managed to create a credible and captivating atmosphere and some of them even gave you the choice to play through them as either warrior, sage or hunter-like character.

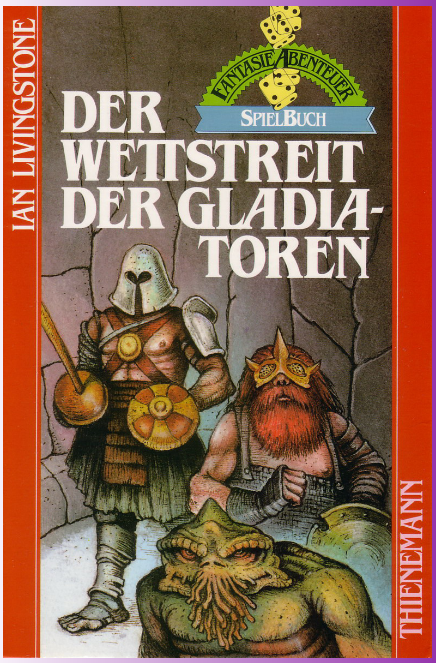
However, the most successful series beside *Fighting Fantasy* was the saga about the last of the Kai Lords – *Lone Wolf* – which was published in Germany in 1984, the same year as in England. It was issued by the publisher Goldmann Verlag in huge numbers of copies, but just like all other series it was cancelled in the early 1990s when the gamebook boom waned. Only twelve of the original twenty-eight books were released in Germany.

3. The End?

At the beginning of the 1990s it



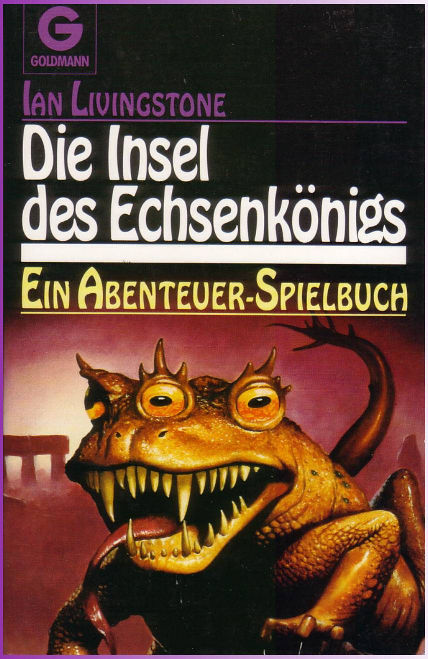




Right: Original covers for (top to bottom) *Kharé - Cityport of Traps*, *Demons of the Deep*, and *Trial of Champions*.

GOLDMANN
Ian Livingstone
Die Stadt der Diebe
Ein Abenteuer-Spielbuch

GOLDMANN
Ian Livingstone
Das Labyrinth des Todes
Ein Abenteuer-Spielbuch


GOLDMANN
Ian Livingstone
Die Insel des Echsenkönigs
Ein Abenteuer-Spielbuch

seemed as if the days of the gamebooks had been numbered. Big series like *Fighting Fantasy* and *Lone Wolf* were ended unfinished without hope of ever being continued. New products like video games and modern role playing games conquered the markets, leaving little room for the "old-fashioned" gamebooks.

The last huge success in Germany belonged to the series *Sagaland* (*Fabled Lands*) which was published by Ravensburger – a big producer of games of all sorts. Sadly, even this series experienced an early end after only four books. With this, the gamebook format seemed to be dead. Solely *Das Schwarze Auge*, the most popular German RPG, continued to produce solo adventures for its rule system. However, these adventures were addressed to the gamers of this very RPG and did not find the favour of diehard gamebook fans who had created their own community.

Single attempts to publish new gamebooks – especially aimed at children – were ceased quite quickly or continued without lasting success. Thus, the adult gamebook fans were constantly ignored.

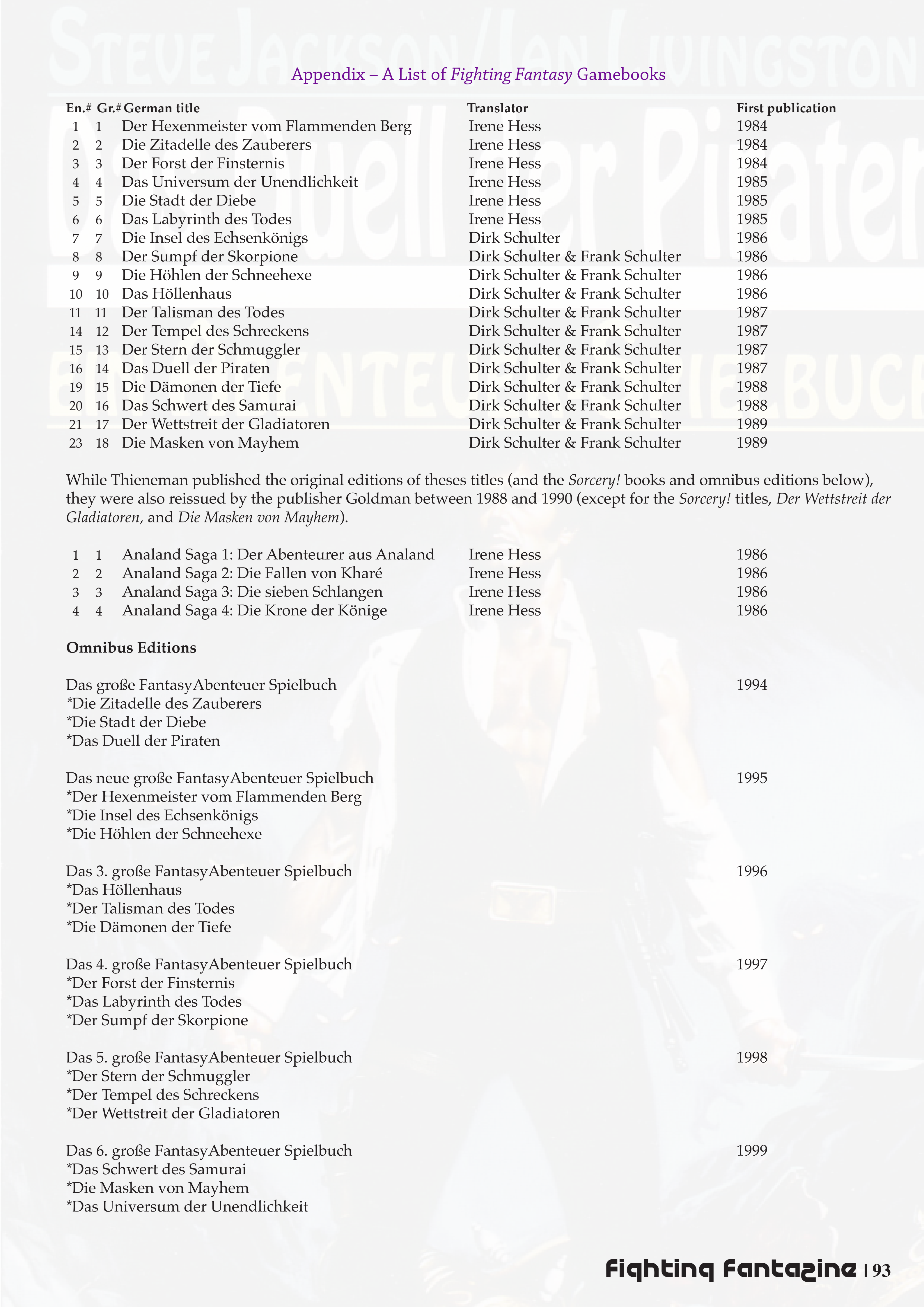
4. Gamebooks Today

With the beginning of the new millennium, new attempts to re-establish the gamebook genre slowly began to catch on. Apart from the series *1000 Gefahren* (Engl.: *1000 Dangers*) from Ravensburger – again aimed solely at children – the publisher Pegasus, whose focus is on RPGs, began to produce new gamebooks. Pegasus published a row of original gamebooks for which they were able to win over the popular German fantasy writer Markus Heitz. Unfortunately, these books only received a moderate echo and were unable to really revive the genre.

STEVE JACKSON · IAN LIVINGSTONE
FANTASIE ABENTEUER
SPIELBUCH
DER STERN DER SCHMUGGLER
THIENEMANN

However, in 2009, the new publisher Mantikore-Verlag (www.mantikore-verlag.de) started to release the revised editions of the *Lone Wolf* gamebook series, which are being published by Mongoose Publishing in the UK. The publishing house Mantikore-Verlag was founded especially for this purpose, jump-started by the direct contact with the author of the series Joe Dever. So far, the first nine books of *Lone Wolf* have been released, and Mantikore-Verlag also began to publish other gamebook series. In 2011, the first books of *Abenteuer Weltgeschichte* (*Real Life Gamebooks*, previously unreleased in Germany) and *Legenden von Harkuna* (*Fabled Lands*) were released. The publisher also has completely new books in the making, proving that there is no lack of original ideas. The old fan base is waking up again and even young people who did not experience the gamebook boom of the 1980s begin to take pleasure in these "new" books. So chances are quite good that the growing awareness of gamebooks eventually results in re-establishing this book format in Germany for hopefully a long time. FF

Above: Original cover for *The Rings of Kether*.
Left: Reprint covers for (top to bottom) *City of Thieves*, *Deathtrap Dungeon*, and *Island of the Lizard King*.



Appendix – A List of *Fighting Fantasy* Gamebooks

En.#	Gr.#	German title	Translator	First publication
1	1	Der Hexenmeister vom Flammenden Berg	Irene Hess	1984
2	2	Die Zitadelle des Zauberers	Irene Hess	1984
3	3	Der Forst der Finsternis	Irene Hess	1984
4	4	Das Universum der Unendlichkeit	Irene Hess	1985
5	5	Die Stadt der Diebe	Irene Hess	1985
6	6	Das Labyrinth des Todes	Irene Hess	1985
7	7	Die Insel des Echsenkönigs	Dirk Schulter	1986
8	8	Der Sumpf der Skorpione	Dirk Schulter & Frank Schulter	1986
9	9	Die Höhlen der Schneehexe	Dirk Schulter & Frank Schulter	1986
10	10	Das Höllenhaus	Dirk Schulter & Frank Schulter	1986
11	11	Der Talisman des Todes	Dirk Schulter & Frank Schulter	1987
14	12	Der Tempel des Schreckens	Dirk Schulter & Frank Schulter	1987
15	13	Der Stern der Schmuggler	Dirk Schulter & Frank Schulter	1987
16	14	Das Duell der Piraten	Dirk Schulter & Frank Schulter	1987
19	15	Die Dämonen der Tiefe	Dirk Schulter & Frank Schulter	1988
20	16	Das Schwert des Samurai	Dirk Schulter & Frank Schulter	1988
21	17	Der Wettstreit der Gladiatoren	Dirk Schulter & Frank Schulter	1989
23	18	Die Masken von Mayhem	Dirk Schulter & Frank Schulter	1989

While Thieneman published the original editions of theses titles (and the *Sorcery!* books and omnibus editions below), they were also reissued by the publisher Goldman between 1988 and 1990 (except for the *Sorcery!* titles, *Der Wettstreit der Gladiatoren*, and *Die Masken von Mayhem*).

1	1	Analand Saga 1: Der Abenteurer aus Analand	Irene Hess	1986
2	2	Analand Saga 2: Die Fallen von Kharé	Irene Hess	1986
3	3	Analand Saga 3: Die sieben Schlangen	Irene Hess	1986
4	4	Analand Saga 4: Die Krone der Könige	Irene Hess	1986

Omnibus Editions

Das große FantasyAbenteuer Spielbuch 1994
*Die Zitadelle des Zauberers
*Die Stadt der Diebe
*Das Duell der Piraten

Das neue große FantasyAbenteuer Spielbuch 1995
*Der Hexenmeister vom Flammenden Berg
*Die Insel des Echsenkönigs
*Die Höhlen der Schneehexe

Das 3. große FantasyAbenteuer Spielbuch 1996
*Das Höllenhaus
*Der Talisman des Todes
*Die Dämonen der Tiefe

Das 4. große FantasyAbenteuer Spielbuch 1997
*Der Forst der Finsternis
*Das Labyrinth des Todes
*Der Sumpf der Skorpione

Das 5. große FantasyAbenteuer Spielbuch 1998
*Der Stern der Schmuggler
*Der Tempel des Schreckens
*Der Wettstreit der Gladiatoren

Das 6. große FantasyAbenteuer Spielbuch 1999
*Das Schwert des Samurai
*Die Masken von Mayhem
*Das Universum der Unendlichkeit

FF THE FACT OF FICTION

DEATHTRAP DUNGEON

The town thronged to the gates of the labyrinth to watch the first challenger of the year step forward to face the Trial of Champions.

It may have only placed seventh in the 2010 poll of fans favourite *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks, but, after *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain*, *Deathtrap Dungeon* is probably the most recognised title from the series. So, what is about this book that is still giving readers headaches as they try and recall where that third gemstone is hidden?

In many respects it is probably because *Deathtrap Dungeon* hits all the clichés of fantasy gaming bang on and does them well. You have a dungeon and it is filled with traps and beasts of varied kinds, encapsulating perfectly what the image of gaming is to the general public. It also both entices and infuriates in equal measure as the reader tries to navigate its twists and turns. With the book now a venerable twenty-eight years old, this writer is tempted to see it as *the* default template for a RPG dungeon crawl. The fact that Livingstone has managed this in only four hundred references is no mean feat.

As it does all this with such apparent ease, it is little wonder it has influenced other titles in the *Fighting Fantasy* series and gamebooks/RPGs further afield for better or for worse.

But regardless of its impact on the arena of fantasy gaming, *Deathtrap Dungeon* remains a landmark book in what was at the time still a young series. For that reason I'm sure that readers were not surprised to be back in that dungeon only a couple of years later...

"The Fact of Fiction" is a series of articles designed to take a deeper look at the information presented in a *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook, whether it be in-jokes, goofs, continuity with other gamebooks, the background to the creation of the book, or similar things. In many ways it is to act like a DVD commentary for the book, telling you things that you might not have already known.

Title Page

❖ In the Wizard Books version, the picture of the attacking Orc of the Puffin edition is replaced by a picture of three Skeletons from *City of Thieves* (Ian Livingstone, 1983) which was also illustrated by Iain McCaig.

Dedication

❖ The dedication switches from a couple of friends in the Puffin edition to the author's wife and children in the Wizard version.

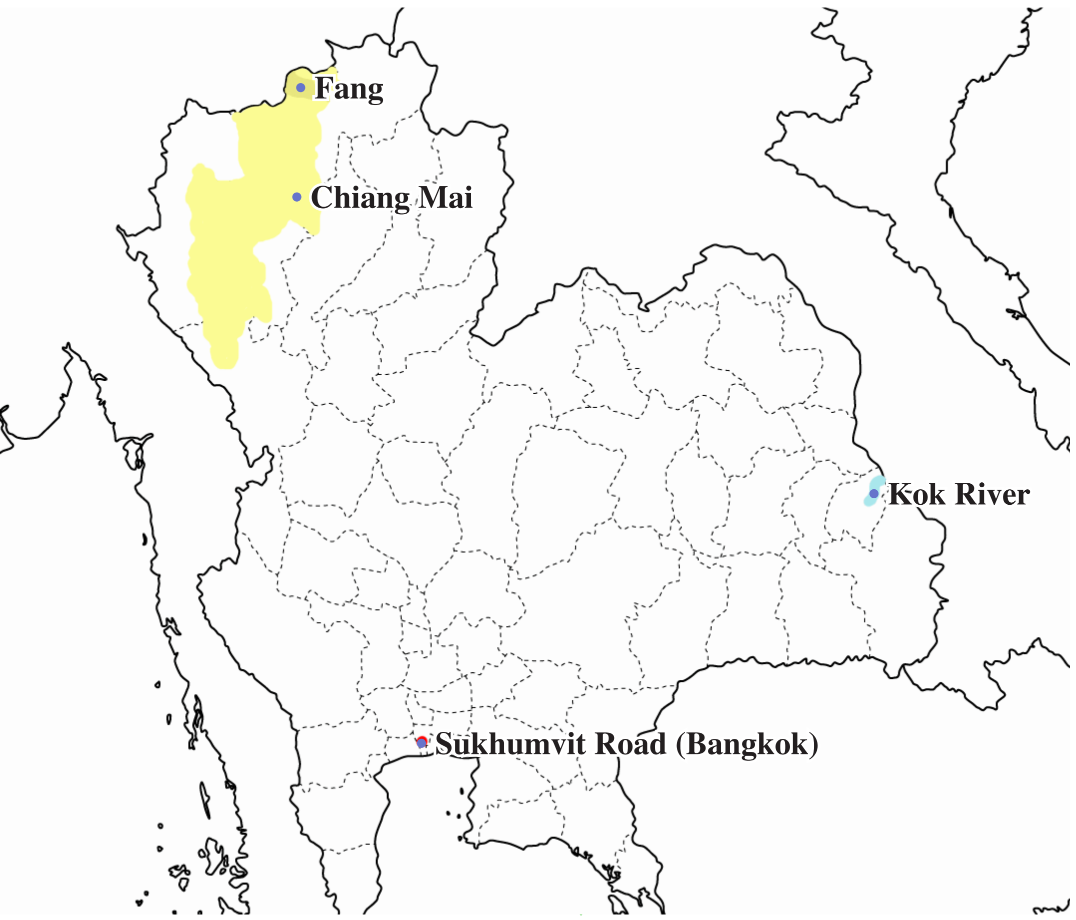
Rules

❖ In the Puffin version of the adventure the player is equipped with a shield from the very beginning. Given that you can later find one in the dungeon and having one proves useful, this is possibly an error.
❖ The rules from *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* (Steve Jackson & Livingstone, 1982) are accidentally copied here in the Wizard edition, leading to errors in the number of potion doses, rules for the Provisions, and the addition of a lantern to the equipment list.

Background

❖ The introductory sequence opens with reference to four places or people whose names are drawn from real-life locations. Of the first three, one, the district of Fang (ฝาง) is to be found in the second, the "northern province" of Thailand known as Chiang Mai (เชียงใหม่). The third, the Kok River (แม่นากก), is, unlike the adventure where it is next to Fang, to be found in another district altogether, one to the far east of the country. This link with the book is confirmed in the '20 Little-known Facts About Fighting Fantasy' from the 25th Anniversary Edition of *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* (2007), where fact #3 explains that *Deathtrap Dungeon* was influenced by a trek through Thailand by Livingstone in 1981 (see the facing page for a partial map on of Thailand which illustrates the locations). The fourth point of reference is Baron Sukumvit, whose name is taken from Sukhumvit Road (ถนนสุขุมวิท) in Bangkok, a location is even further from Fang than the river!
❖ The use of a Gregorian Calender date (introduced in 1582) here, "1 May" and later "April", is a reminder that much of the background to the world of Titan would not be conceived until the publication of *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World* (Marc Gascoigne, 1986) two years later. And even though it was being developed at the time the sequel *Trial of Champions* (Livingstone, 1986) was published, the second dungeon crawl sticks with the Gregorian month of May. If the Titan Calender had been in place at the time of publication, then we would have been told 'The Walk' takes place on the first day of the month of Winds (with April replaced by the month of Sowing).
❖ Port Blacksand, introduced in the title published before this one (*City of Thieves*), is name-checked here, marking the first time that the geography of one book was linked to that of another in the series – Allansia (and later Titan) is born! (see 99 for another link between the two books)
❖ In the drawing, and referenced in the text as the contestant who is "cloaked in black robes", is a character who is later to be explicitly referred to as a Ninja (181). This is the first indication of a non-medieval European-based culture on Titan. While *Sword of the Samurai* (see "The Fact of Fiction" in issue #4) would borrow heavily from Japanese culture, Ninjas would be absent. This was probably because the authors of that book (Mark Smith & Jamie Thomson) were already writing a series based on Ninjas (*The Way of the Tiger*). Since this early appearance, Ninjas have featured in *Caverns of the Snow Witch* (Livingstone, 1984), *The Temple of Testing* (A.E. Arkle, 1985), and as Elite Fanatics in *Armies of Death* (Livingstone, 1988).
❖ Another contestant, the barbarian later identified as Throm, is probably heavily influenced by Conan the Barbarian, the creation of writer Robert E. Howard (1906~1936) who first appeared in the novelette *The Phoenix on the Sword* in 1932. Conan would go on to appear in seventeen tales from Howard before his death in 1936. The character would continue to appear in a large number of titles over the years after Howard's

Violet scarf in place, **Alexander Ballingall**, the sixth and final challanger, steps through the stone gateway to brave the depths of the labyrinth...


Fang
Chiang Mai
Kok River
Sukhumvit Road (Bangkok)

death, including stories from writers such as Robert Jordan (1948~2007) and Harry Turtledove (b.1949). Conan would have been in Livingstone's awareness at the time of writing, thanks to the recent Arnold Schwarzenegger film *Conan the Barbarian* (1982). This would be followed by *Conan the Destroyer*, released the same year as *Deathtrap Dungeon*. A new Conan film, again simply *Conan the Barbarian*, was released in 2011. Throm's name is a play on the name Crom, a fictional deity from the Conan universe worshipped by the Cimmerian race Conan belongs to. How Throm is depicted by artist Iain McCaig at paragraph 282 suggests the possible influence of the character of "Snake" Plissken (played by Kurt Russell (b.1951)) from the film *Escape from New York* (1981), who features long shaggy hair and an eyepatch over one eye.

❖ The drawing of lots, the numbered bamboo sticks featured here, is a long-standing method of deciding things. In many cases the tradition has been that whoever draws the marker of the shortest length was the one assigned to do the allotted task. Given that said task was usually something no one *wanted* to do, it has led to the phrase "to draw the short straw", which signifies bad luck.

2

The hero is brutally attacked by a Giant Scorpion.

❖ Scorpions can be found in most regions of the world (apart from more isolated parts like New Zealand and Antarctica) and it appears the same is true for Titan, Scorpions appearing in Allansia (*Armies of Death*, Livingstone, 1988), Khul (*Scorpion Swamp*, the US Steve Jackson, 1984), and the Old World (*Spellbreaker*, Jonathan Green, 1993). However, unlike the fantasy world where the player here encounters a Giant Scorpion, in reality the creatures are known to reach a maximum size of only 21cm (the African Scorpion *Hadogenes troglodytes*). Giant Scorpions also appear in such titles as *Phantoms of Fear* (Robin Waterfield, 1987) and *Curse of the Mummy* (Green, 1995). Finally, in *Portal of Evil* (Peter Darvill-Evans, 1989) the player can end up changed into a Giant Scorpion by the Portal.

3

The Gnome lets the hero know that they have failed the Trial of Champions.

❖ Gnomes are generally considered to be the invention of the Swiss alchemist Paracelus (1493~1541), although their creation was probably influenced by other earth-spirit entities such as Dwarfs (see

FURTHER INFORMATION

Ian Livingstone
DEATHTRAP DUNGEON
A thrilling fantasy adventure in which YOU are the hero! Complete with combat system and score sheet.
FIGHTING FANTASY GAMEBOOK
IAN LIVINGSTONE
DEATHTRAP DUNGEON
A Fighting Fantasy Gamebook in which YOU are the hero
IAN LIVINGSTONE
FIGHTING FANTASY
DEATHTRAP DUNGEON
YOU ARE THE HERO!

AUTHOR:
Ian Livingstone
INTERIOR ARTIST:
Iain McCaig
PUBLISHED:
March 29 1984
PUBLISHER: Puffin
GAMEBOOK NUMBER: 6
COVER ARTIST:
Iain McCaig
REPUBLISHED:
June 3 2002
PUBLISHER: Wizard
GAMEBOOK NUMBER: 3
COVER ARTIST:
Mel Grant
REPUBLISHED:
September 3 2009
PUBLISHER: Wizard
GAMEBOOK NUMBER: 3
COVER ARTIST:
Mel Grant
AVAILABILITY:
In print.

"The Fact of Fiction" in issue #6). By the 19th Century Gnomes had evolved from their Dwarf-like origins to something akin to the opposite of Fairies and/or Elves in terms of temperament and appearance. Gnomes have featured more recently in such works as the series of books by Wil Huygen (1922~2009) and Rien Poorvliet (1932~1995) that began with *Gnomes* in 1976. The book was later adapted into an animated film in 1980 and the later books as the animated television series *David el Gnomo* (*The World of David the Gnome*) in 1985 and *La llamada de los gnomos* (*Wisdom of the Gnomes*) in 1987. More recently Gnomes have featured as garden pests in the *Harry Potter* books (1997~2007) and the *South Park* episode *Gnomes* (1998) where they are stealing underwear as part of a confused plan to make a profit. The *Fighting Fantasy* Gnome is closer to the *Dungeons & Dragons* (1974) depiction of the creature that any other source, such Gnomes appearing in several books including *The Forest of Doom* (Livingstone, 1984), *Kharé – Cityport of Traps* (Jackson (UK), 1984), and *Vault of the Vampire* (Keith Martin, 1989).

5

Crawling along the floor, the hero comes across a group of Troglodytes.

❖ The term Troglodyte appears to have arisen from *Troglodytae* (Τρωγλοδύται) which literally means 'cave goers', and was a name used by many ancient historians (such as Josephus (37~c.100 AD) to describe a group of people who probably lived somewhere along the African side of the Red Sea. The term appears in Carl Linnaeus' (1707~1778) work *Systema Naturae* (1735), and the being described is most likely based on exaggerated accounts, from the colonial settlers of the time, of native peoples or actual simians. The word later became associated with the generic term "Cave man" that is usually used to refer to the Neanderthal people (see for example the funk song *Troglodite* (1972, later titled *Troglodyte (Cave Man)*) by the Jimmy Castor Bunch). Troglodytes appear in *Dungeons & Dragons*, but not until the 1977 first edition of the *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons Monster Manual* which describes them as underground dwelling, reptilian creatures. This depiction puts them at odds with the *Fighting Fantasy* variation, which is neither cave man nor reptilian in nature. Their illustrated appearance in this adventure (accompanying paragraph 230) makes them appear to be close relatives of the Gnomes (see the drawing of Igbut the Gnome at paragraph 364 for comparison), but *Titan* makes it clear that they are related to Goblins (see "The Fact of Fiction" in issue #6). They reappear in such titles as *Seas of Blood* (Andrew Chapman, 1985) and *Return to Firetop Mountain* (Livingstone, 1992), but it is their appearance in *Portal of Evil* that throws up some issues by appearing in a different form again (for more see "The Fact of Fiction" in issue #7).

6

The hero is injured while running for cover from the Manticore.

❖ The Manticore is a creature of Persian mythology, possessing the body of a red lion and a human head with shark-like teeth. Some variations have the creature horned, winged, or even with both features. Still further it can have a Dragon (see "The Fact of Fiction" in issue #6) or Scorpion tail, a tail which can in some versions shoot poisonous spines. The English name for the creature is a corruption of the Persian name via Greek misinterpretation of the pronunciation, the name originally meaning 'man-eater', the name reflecting the belief that the Manticore consumes its victims whole with nothing left behind. It is probable that the Manticore myth was based on garbled or misinterpreted reports of the Tiger. Encounters with Manticores are few and far between on Titan, the only other notable appearance being at the climax of *The Shamutanti Hills* (Jackson (UK), 1983), although there its wings are feathered as opposed to the Bat-like appearance depicted (see the illustration for paragraph 134) – a possible species variation between Khul and Allansia? This Bat-winged version is possibly actually a Chaos Manticore which are also known to have Bat-like wings. The Chaos Manticore appears in *Master of Chaos* (Martin, 1990).

8

The Mirror Demon pulls the hero into the mirror, trapping them in another dimension.

❖ The earliest manufactured mirrors were made from polished stone such as obsidian (see "The Fact of Fiction" in issue #2) with example dating from as far back as c.6000BC. Polished copper and bronze mirrors followed in c.400BC and c.2000BC respectively with metal-backed glass mirrors following in the first century AD. The Mirror Demon here is a reflection (no pun intended) of a series of superstitions revolving around mirrors and the Human soul. The most prominent of these is the belief that the mirror can trap a soul and that is precisely what happens here.

9

The hero searches the belongings of the Hobgoblins.

❖ Hobgoblins are a feature of folk lore which pictures them as a more mischievous version of Brownies. The character of Puck from William Shakespeare's (1564~1616) play *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (written between 1590 and 1596) is an example of how Hobgoblins were perceived as being the practical jokers of the fairy realm. The interpretation seen here in the world of *Fighting Fantasy* draws heavily on the *Dungeons & Dragon* Hobgoblin of the first edition, which in turn borrowed from J.R.R. Tolkien's (1892~1973) *The Hobbit* (1937). Tolkien later admitted that his depiction of them as larger, more menacing versions of Goblins (see "The Fact of Fiction" in issue #6) was an error on his part, and in later Middle Earth works Tolkien went as far as renaming them Uruks or Uruk-hai to correct the mistake. Hobgoblins are a regular feature of the gamebooks, reappearing in *Island of the Lizard King* (Livingstone, 1984), *The Crown of Kings* (Jackson (UK), 1985), and *Stealer of Souls* (Martin, 1988) among others.

16

The hero is knocked unconscious by choosing the wrong combination.

❖ The means to open the final door of the dungeon is clearly based on the model of the slot machine as invented by American Charles Fey in c.1887. The original slot machine was based on the card game of *Poker*, but was designed around just five symbols (horseshoe, diamond, spade, heart, and a Liberty Bell) on three reels in order to simplify the number of possible combinations. While on the slot machine a line of three identical symbols meant a payout (three Liberty Bells on the original machine paid the highest amount of money – ten nickels), in the case of this door the hero is looking for three different gemstones. That said, there is also the the influence of the *Mastermind* boardgame (first released in 1970 and similar to an older code-breaker game known as *Bulls and Cows* which uses numbers in groups of four) which involves one player putting five coloured pegs in any order out of sight of the other player, who must then, via gradual elimination, work out that order. Igbut's cries of "x skulls and x crowns" matches the use of black and white pegs in the game to indicate to the guessing player whether one of the pegs is the right colour and in the right slot or wether one of the pegs if the right colour but in the wrong slot (the absence of a peg means that one of the pegs is the wrong colour entirely).

❖ Something of a possible error here (and at each of the other paragraphs offering combinations to the locked door) in that the player is given the chance to turn to the paragraph they are currently on!

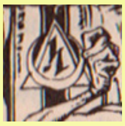
18

The snake attempts to bite the hero, but the hero escapes unscathed.

❖ We are not given much information about the snake in question here apart from it being a Cobra. Cobras, of which there are several varieties, usually

BANNER OF THE BARON?

Of note with the illustration that accompanies the "Background" is the depiction of the man who is presumably Baron Sukumvit (the man in the ostentatious headgear). On his clothing is a symbol of a triangle with a hoop or ring about it. This logo (for want of a better word) reappears on the necklace of the old man (paragraph 12), on the chair of the Dwarf Trialmaster (60), on the Troglodyte idol (230), on the archway above the goblet (299), on the final door of the dungeon (364), and in the incidental art that first appears between paragraphs 14 and 15. Presumably this is the symbol of either the dungeon itself or of Sukumvit. Only on Sukumvit and the old man does the symbol *not* feature a skull. Finally, on the Troglodyte idol, the final door, and the incidental illustration, the symbol is marked in the bottom left and right hand corners of the triangle with runes shaped suspiciously like the letters "I" and "M". *Who could that be in reference to I wonder?*



belong to the family Elapidae and are found in the southern parts of Africa and Asia. Cobras specifically, of any kind, do not appear to be very common on Titan with *Curse of the Mummy* proving to be the only book with a significant encounter with such a snake outside of this dungeon. That said, poisonous snakes appear all over Titan, so many of those unidentified reptiles could potentially have been Cobras.

19
The hero is unable to avoid the gaze of Medusa and is swiftly turned to stone.

❖ Medusa from Greek mythology was one of the Gorgons, a generic term used to refer to a variety of terrifying female creatures. In the classical mythology Medusa was one of three sisters born to two Greek gods of the sea (Phorcys, god of hidden dangers of the deep, and Ceto, a primordial sea goddess), but while her two sisters were immortal she was not. Early depictions on vases and reliefs had Medusa (and her sisters) as monsters on the outside as well as the inside, but by the 5th Century BC she was beginning to be illustrated as both beautiful and terrifying. In most versions of the tale, she is slain by Perseus who uses a polished shield as a mirror in order to watch her while avoiding her gaze which could turn a person to stone. Having the Medusa as a species as opposed to one individual can probably be blamed on the first edition of *Dungeons & Dragons* where they appear as humanoids with a lower body of a snake. *Fighting Fantasy* adopts them as a species, with the terms "Gorgon" and "Medusa" being used pretty much interchangeably. They are, however, very uncommon on Titan, popping up in such books as *Armies of Death* , *Legend of the Shadow Warriors* (Hand, 1991) and *Eye of the Dragon* (Livingstone, 2005).

21
The strike has no effect on the Bloodbeast.

❖ Perhaps due to its almost iconic status as *the Fighting Fantasy* monster (see the 2010 survey results in issue #6 for example), as well as doing cover duty on the cover of the Puffin editions, the Bloodbeast has had just the one outing in the gamebooks – this one.

28
The hero strips the Dwarf's body of its chainmail.

❖ Credited as an invention of the Celts, mail appears to have been created at some point after 300 BC. The word used today is probably derived from the French word *maillier* meaning 'to hammer'. The commonly used term chain-mail first crops up in print in Sir Walter Scott's (1771~1832) *The Fortunes of Nigel* (1822).

❖ It has been observed by some readers that if the chainmail was fitted for the Dwarf, how does it fit the player whom they assume to be a regularly sized person? Given the picture at paragraph 60, we can assume from that the Dwarf has disproportionate dwarfism. This means that while his legs and arms are greatly reduced in length compared to an average person, his trunk, which is what the chain-mail would be protecting, would of regular size and thus fit any other person regardless of how long their limbs are.

37
The passage opens into a cavern where sits a large idol.

❖ The elongated earlobes, unclothed top half and generous proportions suggest that the idol is based on representations of 布袋 (Budai) who is often known as the 'Laughing Buddha' (a figure who supposedly lived in China during the 10th Century AD), but should not be confused with Siddhārtha Gautama Buddha, the founder of Buddhism (who lived in the 6th Century AD). Livingstone would have encountered many depictions of Budai during his holiday in Thailand that helped inspire *Deathtrap Dungeon*. That tells us where the image originates from,

Budai Photo: © Pawyi Lee, 2012 Used under Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike 3.0 License

but in terms of Titan's history, who does this large idol actually represent? No known religious figures or gods of Titan completely match the idol shown here, but the closest match physically would appear to be Slangg, the god of malice. In fact the description of Slangg's priests, as wearing orange robes and having shaved heads, matches neatly with the dress code of Buddhist monks. So perhaps the idol represents a particularly famous priest and/or prophet of Slangg?

❖ The Flying Guardians which appear on either side of the idol are most likely based on the prehistoric bird *Phorusrhacos longissimus* that lived during the early to mid part of the Miocene epoch (of the Neogene period). They are understood to have stood 2.5m in height, with a probable weight of around 130kg. Unlike their Titan counterparts, Phorusrhacos were unable to fly. Flying Guardians make a reappearance in *The Riddling Reaver* (Paul Mason & Steve Williams, 1988), although their appearance in that adventure is closer to that of a Hawk than how they are depicted here.

39

The hero dodges an attack by a Giant Fly and then enters combat with it.

❖ The Fly in question here is probably based on the common Housefly (*Musca domestica*), which reach to 8~12mm in length as adults, far short of the giant proportions described here! In mythology flies appear as *do'tsoh* ('Big Fly') of the Navajo tradition where the god is a mentor and advice giver. In the world of Titan in a religion that predates the current belief system of the region of Hachiman, the god Hammurabi was the Lord of the Flies. The Fly also sometimes appears as a symbol of the High Lord of Chaos, Decay. A Giant Fly also makes an appearance in *Howl of the Werewolf* (Green, 2007).

49

Two Leprechauns are making a run for it down the corridor.

❖ Leprechauns are a creature from Irish mythology, usually depicted as a diminutive, bearded man, dressed in green clothes and hat. They are also generally held to hide hoards of gold in pots at the end of the rainbow and grant wishes should they be captured by Humans. This is an image of Leprechauns now stereotyped through the popular media and only bears superficial similarity to the folk creature of their origins. The familiar concept of modern tales only began to coalesce in the 20th Century, as prior to this point Leprechauns differed in appearance depending on which part of Ireland the folk tales were being told in. An example of this was the fact that before the 20th Century the creatures were generally described as wearing red clothes. The current image of Leprechauns is mainly an American synthesis of various sources and probably has its roots in the Leprechauns depicted in Herminie Templeton Kavanagh's (1896~1933) *Darby O'Gill and the Good People* (1901~2), which was turned into an animated film by Walt Disney (1901~1966) in 1959, and *Finian's Rainbow* which was a Broadway musical launched in 1947 and itself turned into a film in 1968. A darker take on the creatures appears in the film series that began with the horror film *Leprechaun* (1993). Leprechauns also make appearances in *The Citadel of Chaos* (Jackson (UK), 1983), *City of Thieves*, *Fighting Fantasy – The Role-playing Game* (Jackson (UK), 1984) and *Clash of the Princes* (Chapman & Martin Allan, 1986) among others.

50

Throm the Barbarian destroys a ring the hero was wearing.

❖ Battle-axes of popular culture are usually associated with the Vikings, although the use of them was actually far more widespread. The axe in question, as depicted in the illustrations (such as that which accompanies the "Background" section), is a *sagaris* style of axe which appears to have developed among the horse-riding peoples of the Eurasian step (an area which roughly covers from Romania to Siberia). The sagaris axe is notable for featuring a blade on one side and a sharp, ice-pick-like point on the opposite side of the haft.

55

The hero is charged with decoding two notes given to them by the Dwarf Trialmaster.

❖ Anagrams appear to be an ancient means of playing with words, one which possibly can be traced as far back as the Greeks of the 3rd Century BC and which was a pass time for the educated elite during the time that Latin was the predominant language of written materials. With regard to the English language (due to the flexible nature of the language till the standardisation of spelling), many attempts were made to define the rules of what could rightly be considered an anagram. One of the most famous of these is George Puttenham's (1529~1590) *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589).

69

The hero makes a quick getaway, leaving the room without attracting Ivy's notice.

❖ In the second link with Livingstone's previous *Fighting Fantasy* adventure *City of Thieves* (see "Background"), the Troll who features here, named Ivy, is later mentioned (in paragraph 99) as being the sister of Sourbelly. Sourbelly had appeared in *City of Thieves* as one of Lord Azzur's Blacksand Guards, alongside another Troll called Fatnose.

82

Using some ropes, the hero makes an escape from the Pit Fiend.

❖ Thanks to the illustration (see 245) we can see that the Pit Fiend is quite clearly modelled on the dinosaur Tyrannosaurus Rex, a creature which lived on Earth between 67 to 65.5 million years ago. Pit Fiends are thankfully a less than common occurrence on Titan, the manual *Out of the Pit* (Gascoigne, 1985) indicating that they are to be found in jungles and deserts. This means that Sukumvit probably acquired this example from somewhere in Southern Allansia.

88

Captured by some Troglodytes, the hero is to be subjected to a trial by ancient rite.

❖ A different Run of the Arrow ritual features in *Dagger of Darkness* (see "The Fact of Fiction" in issue #3), on that occasion conducted by a group of Amazons.

91

The hero is struck by a morning star wielded by an Orc.

❖ The weapon known as a Morning Star appears to have first come into use around the start of the 14th Century, particularly in Germany. However, the use of a chain to depict the weapon (at 326) means that the weapon here is probably closer to a Flail, another weapon from the same period. The advantage of the Flail was that the handle would hit a defender's shield and the chain would carry the striking end behind the shield with a forceful blow. The Morning Star on the other hand was a spiked ball fixed to a wooden handle.

100

The hero comes across a door marked with an "X".

❖ The use of an "x" to mark a location is of such a long standing tradition that its origins are obscured by history. *Treasure Island* (1883) by Robert Louis Stevenson (1850~1894) is considered to be the starting point for the concept of pirate treasure maps where an "x marks the spot", although there is suggestion that the term itself is older than Stevenson's novel.

106

A secret compartment opens to reveal a bottle containing a potion.

❖ Dopplegänger is a German term for "double walker" and was a paranormal double of an individual and represented an evil or misfortune. The term was first used by Jean Paul (1763~1825) in

TAKING THE WALK

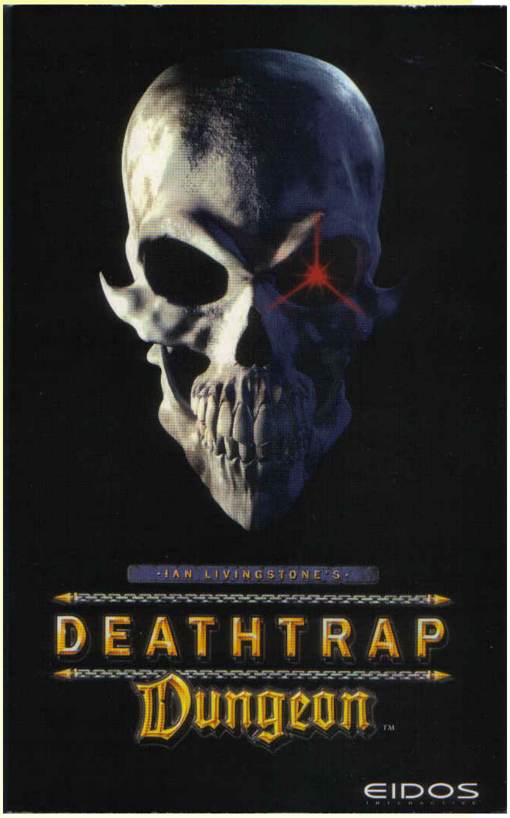
As noted in the introduction, *Deathtrap Dungeon* probably comes second only to *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* in terms of recognition when mentioning the *Fighting Fantasy* series. So it comes as no surprise that, like *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* (see "The Fact of Fiction" in issue #6), it has sequels...

The first two are additional gamebooks for the range (both by Livingstone): *Trial of Champions* which utilises Sukumvit's dungeon once more but not the hero of the original adventure, and *Armies of Death* which features the hero of *Trial of Champions* but not the dungeon.

In addition there is the direct sequel (using the same hero as *Deathtrap Dungeon*) in the form of the multi-player adventure *Deathtrap on Legs* by Paul Mason and Steve Williams (*Warlock* #7, 1985), which was the first adventure to be based on the multi-player system expounded upon in *Fighting Fantasty – The Introductory Role-playing Game* (Steve Jackson, 1984). Like *Armies of Death*, this adventure has nothing to do with the dungeon.

A further gamebook sequel had been planned in the early 90s when the Puffin range had still been a going concern. This was to have been an adaptation of the then in-development PlayStation game *Deathtrap Dungeon* (1998). Veteran gamebook author Dave Morris (*The Keep of the Lich-Lord*) has been approached to do the adaptation, but noted in an interview that it:

> "didn't really have a story to speak of. 'Barbarian enters the medieval equivalent of a reality TV gameshow.' i.e., it was last man standing in a dungeon full of monsters and treasure. No logic to it. There was an insect level, a circus level, etc. Exploding pigs. Shotguns. A female character was suddenly added because *Tomb Raider* was doing well and somebody got the idea that every game needed a busty heroine. Nobody missed anything, believe me. The world did not need it to happen."[1]



The delaying of the release of the game by several years and the subsequent end of the Puffin range were probably the reasons for the non-appearance of the proposed book. Instead, *Deathtrap Dungeon* was reissued with a cover to match that of the video game.

---

[1] http://web.archive.org/web/20020924191039/www.advancedfightingfantasy.com/interviews4b.htm

the novel *Siebenkäs* (1796). By the time Livingstone came to write the book, the term had come to generically mean a double or look-alike.

113
An attempt to hit a target with a wooden ball fails, the shot missing.
❖ Throwing balls at the skull here is a variation on the traditional coconut shy/shie which are a staple of funfairs and fêtes where the player has three chances with wooden balls to knock a coconut from its perch. The term "shy" is a colloquial English term meaning "to throw" and the game probably has its origins in the throwing game known as Aunt Sally where players threw balls at a figurine.

118
The hero and Throm dash through the falling rocks.
❖ A stalactite is type of dripping stone that generally forms inside limestone caves. They are formed when the calcium carbonate rock is dissolved by water to create a calcium bicarbonate solutions. When this solution makes contact with air the reaction that caused the solution is reversed, the calcium carbonate being deposited at the point where the solution meets the air. This creates a column that slowly grows down from the ceiling.

131
The hero narrowly avoids being killed by a bolt from a crossbow.
❖ The crossbow probably originates from the lands neighbouring Ancient China sometime around the mid-5th Century BC. Some evidence suggests that not longer after they were being used in Ancient Greece and became a staple of armies throughout Europe till the development of gunpowder weapons with an acceptable reloading time. While an archer with a regular bow could launch more arrows per minute than with a crossbow and the crossbow had a greater chance of mechanical failure, the crossbow had a number of advantages: they require less training for troops, had greater accuracy, and could deliver arrows with superior force to the point of sometimes piercing armour.

164
The hero navigates a wet corridor, following some footprints.
❖ In a minor error, the prints spotted here by the hero, we are told, are made by boots. However when the player chooses to follow the boot prints, the subsequent illustration (at 299) shows the dead contestant (the other Barbarian) who is quite obviously barefoot. One can only assume that one of the humanoid

denizens of the dungeon stole them from the dead contestant.

170
The hero happens upon the Elf contestant in battle with a snake.

❖ The Boa Constrictor (of which *Boa constrictor constrictor* is generally most representative of the snakes as they are depicted in works of fiction) is a species of snake found mainly in the Americas and Caribbean. As shown in the accompanying illustration they constrict their victim to death, although during this process they also hold on by biting their victim in order to reduce the chances of being dislodged. Due to a slow metabolism the snake can take several days to digest its prey (length of time depends on the size of the prey) and can then do without eating again for up to several months.

❖ Elves are a mythical creature from Germanic folklore, one which was prone to interfering with Humans and animals in both positive and negative ways. For example, the words "nightmare" and "hiccup" originate from words using the Old English term for Elf (ælf) as both were believed to be caused by Elves. With the Early Modern period (roughly 1500~1800AD) the creatures, as part of the Romance culture of the time became associated with fairies. As Elves were kindred to the Dwarfs of Germanic folklore, they were often depicted as being short in stature. The modern Elf as seen in most fantasy works has Tolkien's *The Hobbit* as its starting point, an image that was later reinforced by TSR's *Dungeons & Dragons* RPG which was used by many writers as a resource for creating fantasy worlds. It was these works that gave Elves their otherworldly beauty, pointed ears, and benevolent natures (prior to the sea-change of opinion Elves were occasionally depicted perpetrating acts such as murder and rape). As a reaction to the ubiquitous nature of this image of Elves, many recent writers have returned to first principles and based their interpretations on older iterations of the mythical creatures (see for example the works of Terry Pratchett (b.1948)).

181
The ninja contestant attempt to kill the hero.

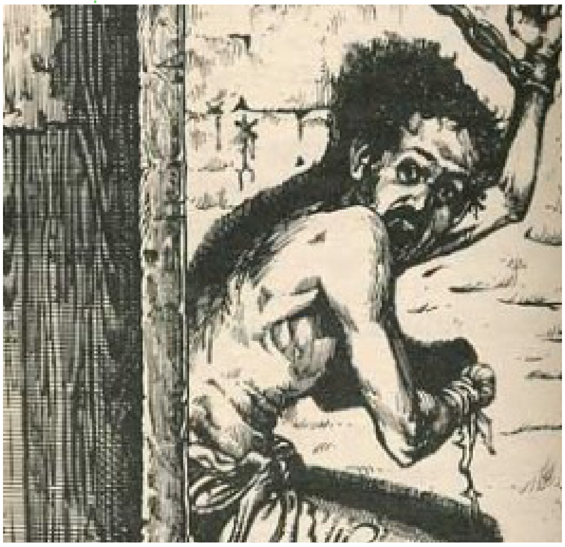
❖ The "star-edged disc" used as a weapon here is something of a cliché when it comes to weapons used by Ninja in fiction. Known as *shuriken* (手裏剣), literally "hand hidden blade", these weapons were effectively a supplement to a primary weapon such as a sword. They were traditionally made from materials to hand such as needle and coins as this allowed them to avoid raising suspicion by resembling inoffensive objects. Those shuriken that were made from scratch for the purpose of combat generally resembled spikes of iron or steel and reached between 12~21cm in length. The modern throwing star (*hira shuriken*) depicted in this adventure are usually made from stainless steel and come in a large variety of styles.

183
The hero avoids contact with a corrosive slime through the use of stilts.

❖ Stilts have been in used at least as far back as the 6th Century BC, a period from which materials survive illustrating stiltwakers in Ancient Greece. More famously, the shepherds of the Landes region of southern France used stilts as a means of traversing the terrain of the area as well as giving them a greater line of sight due to their realised position.

210
The door opens to reveal a cell containing a man missing one hand.

❖ Author Ian Livingstone makes the first of many cameo appearances in the illustrations of his *Fighting Fantasy* books, here popping up as a prisoner chained to a wall. Thus it is quite appropriate that this character should be the one to pass on the clue about what items are needed to eventually escape the dungeon.



242
The heat is proving too much for the hero who falls unconscious.

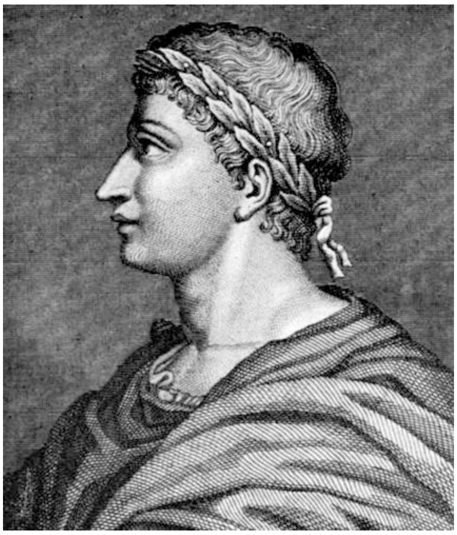
❖ In a slightly confusing transition, this reference has the hero "fall unconscious to the floor". This is followed by a SKILL roll. If the player roll less or equal to their SKILL store they are directed to paragraph 48, where they learn that their "immense strength and grim determination *keep [them] from falling unconscious* to the floor" (my emphasis).

304
Looking for a Gold Piece leads to contact with a poisonous spider.

❖ The Black Widow Spider is of the genus *Latrodectus*, sometimes known by the common name of 'Widow Spiders'. The likely candidate from the genus that Livingstone is drawing on here is *Latrodectus mactans*, which is the Southern Black Widow found in the southeastern regions of North America. This is because prior to 1970 the name *mactans* was used for all North American Black Widows, whereas now they are classified into three different species. This Southern species features the distinctive red hourglass shape on the underside of the her abdomen (although this marking isn't restricted to this single species of widow spider). It also on occasion eats the males of the species (again common to many widow spiders), leading to the genus earning the title "widow". Black Widows also appear in *Eye of the Dragon*.

400
The hero surprises Sukumvit by surviving and beating the dungeon.

❖ The laurel crown, made from interlocking leaves and branches of a Bay Laurel (*Laurus nobilis*) and presented here to the hero on the occasion of besting the dungeon, has its origins in Greek mythology where the god Apollo was often depicted wearing a laurel crown. These crowns came to be awarded in Greece for athletic victors at the Ancient Olympics, where the crown was made of wild Olive Tree (*Olea oleaster*), or at poetic meets which has bequeathed the term "poet laureate". This tradition was then adopted by the Romans, where a laurel crown would be given to those who were successful in war campaigns. In most cases, unlike modern laurel wreaths, the laurel crown was an incomplete ring, closer to a horseshoe shape.



Art: © Iain McCaig, 2012

TrollsZine! #4

Edited by Scott Grant & Dan Hembree • **Illustrated by** various artists
Trollbridge Production • **Published** February 10th 2012 • **RRP** Free

PRICE: FREE!
TROLLSZINE!
ISSUE 4
WINTER 2012
CHAD THORSON 2010

Ah, *Tunnels and Trolls*. The second RPG to be created, *Tunnels and Trolls* is still going strong as a fun and quick to master RPG. Its dedicated fan base create tons of extra material for all to enjoy. *TrollsZine!* is such a collection of enjoyable materials.

Now in its 4th issue, the free fanzine consistently produces great *Tunnels and Trolls* material. For free! Each free issue includes at least one solo and at least one adventure, opinion columns, house rules, new ideas for items and monsters, a short story and much more. Issues 2~4 also have a 'how to write a solo' column.

The fun and humour of *Tunnels and Trolls* seeps into these columns, turning what could be dry material into an entertaining read. For example, descriptions of monsters in *TrollsZine!* #1 is presented as a Trollish cookbook, with best ways of cooking monsters in addition to their stats, weapons etc. Or a list of items with amusing names and features such as a dagger with a fold in comb that provides a +2 bonus to charisma.

My personal favourite comes from *TrollZine!* #3 which describes and undead regenerating chicken. If you eat a piece of this chicken, it will grow inside you and burst out of your chest, *Aliens* style. Inspired.

There is something for everyone here. Gamebook lovers can play the solos (they need the rules – 5th edition is free!, 7th costs £9.48), DMs can read about rules, monsters and scenarios and anyone can just read the fiction and enjoy the entertaining presentation of the zine. You can get all of the issues of *TrollZine!* at DriveThruRPG.com. Did I mention that the magazines and early editions of the rules are all free?

STUART LLOYD

Draco Venturus #2

Edited by ManuLuc & Floribur • **Illustrated by** various artists
Scriptarium • **Published** September 30th 2011 • **RRP** Free

Draco Venturus
Scriptarium
LOUP SOLITAIRE
- DOSSIER: TOUT SUR LES SEIGNEURS KAI
- UNE PRÉSENTATION DE LA VILLE DE RAGADORN
"Les Esclaves de la Boue"
Neige d'Automne
LA SUITE DE SES AVENTURES PAR THE OISEAU POUR LOUP SOLITAIRE
TITAN
- INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE: GRAHAM BOTTLEY CHEF DE PROJET DE LA RÉÉDITION DU JDR "ADVANCED FIGHTING FANTASY"
- DÉFIS SYSTÈME, UN NOUVEAU JDR HÉROÏQUE PRÊT-À-JOUER
NUMERO 2
GRATUIT
ETE 2011

All things considered, I deem myself fairly lucky to be a French-speaking gamebooks fan. After all, we had more than a hundred English gamebooks translated in our language. Another source of pride is the activity of the fanbase, as illustrated by the endeavors of Scriptarium. Not only do they work on supplements for the *Lone Wolf* RPG, they have obtained the rights to translate the revamped *Advanced Fighting Fantasy* range. This would suffice to keep them occupied 24/7, but they still manage to find some time for an online fanzine.

The two issues of *Draco Venturus* issued so far illustrate the aim of Scriptarium: building bridges between gamebooks and RPGs. The main focus of the fanzine is *Lone Wolf*: thus, the first issue offers a detailed description of the city of Port Bax complete with a RPG scenario, while the second one includes gameplay tips for Kai Masters, among other things. Both issues include a long adventure in which you play Autumn Snow, a young Kai apprentice: they read as an epic saga, and form a very-well crafted tribute to the first Lone Wolf books.

However, the world of *Fighting Fantasy* is never left behind: there is a short overview of the world of Titan in the first issue, and the second one features an interview with Graham Bottley and a proposition for an entirely new set of rules called "Défis Système." One can guess the fanzine would also be a great place to see scenarios for *AFF*, be they translations or entirely new ones.

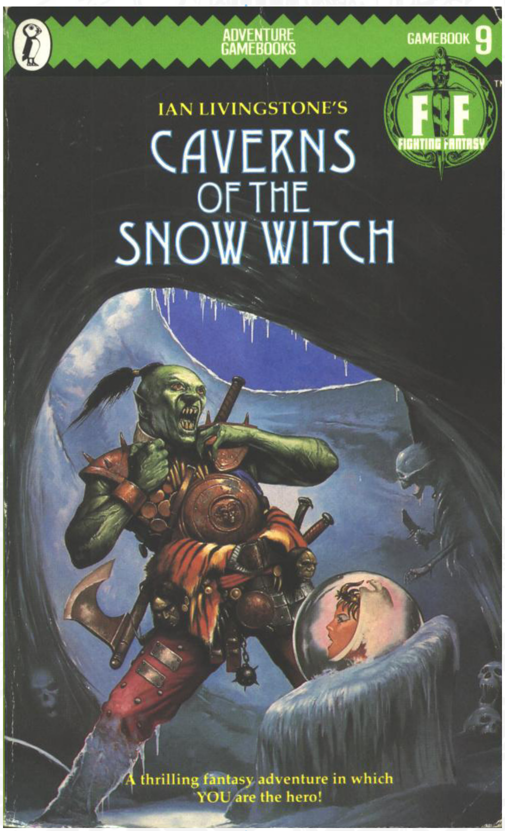
So far, even if the time passing between issues has been quite long, *Draco Venturus* has proven to be a worthwhile read: these are people who know and love what they are talking about. Just like *Fighting Fantazine*! Visit draco-venturus.fr/ to download the fanzine.

JULIEN MENELDUR

FIGHTING DANTASY

adapted from Fightingdantasy.blogspot.com

This, the ninth book in the series is apparently a prequel to *Forest of Doom* – though getting as far as I did on both the attempts I made in the hour prior to sitting down ito write this, you wouldn't know it.


ADVENTURE GAMEBOOKS
GAMEBOOK 9
FF FIGHTING FANTASY
IAN LIVINGSTONE'S
CAVERNS OF THE SNOW WITCH
A thrilling fantasy adventure in which YOU are the hero!

Brutal is perhaps the best word to describe *Caverns of the Snow Witch*... according to Wikipedia it's a three-parter with a couple of secondary characters eventually tagging along with you. I never got as far as half way through the first mission, and only briefly met a dwarf before being stabbed in the shoulder to death (I used to be an adventurer, like you, then I took a dagger in the shoulder).

First of all, it didn't help that I initially rolled a piss-poor SKILL level of 7. My STAMINA was 24 – I'm not sure what kind of training leads a warrior to have such power and endurance but the dexterity of a wombat. My LUCK was 11, which I was going to need.

Soon after trekking off in search of a Yeti, after easily killing a couple of goblins, I had the option of trudging on despite the weather, or hanging out in the snow overnight. I've seen *The Empire Strikes Back* and know not to spend too much time in the snow, so I pushed ahead, eventually contracting a mean case of frostbite in, not surprisingly, my sword arm. With my skill at a ridiculously low 4, I wolfed down my Potion of Skill to restore it, and found refuge in a warm cabin.

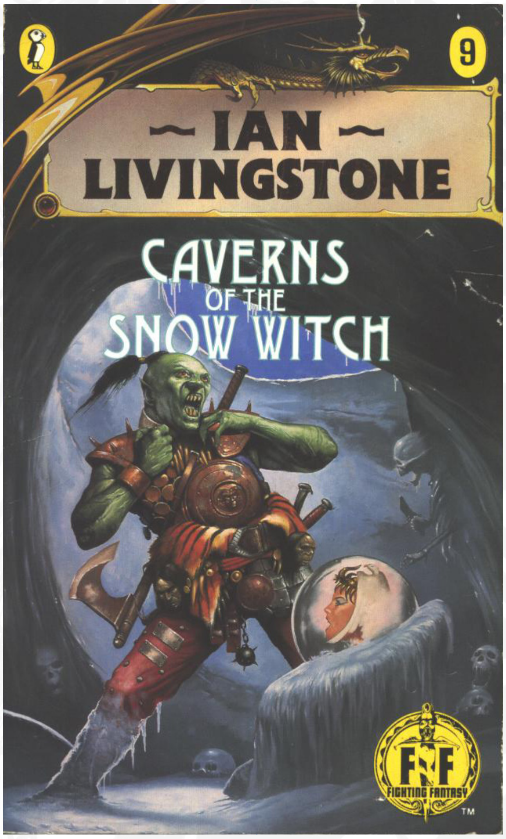
On leaving the cabin, I took the occupants' weapons – a war hammer (I assume this is the link to *Forest of Doom*) and a spear. After losing even more STAMINA in the snow (when will this end?!) I soon came across the Yeti, but the frostbite prevented me from slaying the creature in one swoop, and I was mercilessly slaughtered.

Right, that was far too short an adventure to write about I decided, so re-rolled for a second attempt. SKILL? Seven. Bugger. STAMINA 22, LUCK 11. Once again I must've been using some cheap infomercial-advertised exercise system.

So with a LUCK of 11, I took my chances on the ice bridge and dispatched the two Goblins – not without difficulty though, they got me down to a single stamina point. Hmmm. I wolfed down five meals, which in *Fighting Fantasy* world gets you back up to full strength somehow, like they come with loaded with caffeine and guarana or something, and built an igloo for the night. It would seem my SKILL rating of 7 only applies to fighting, and not being an eskimo.

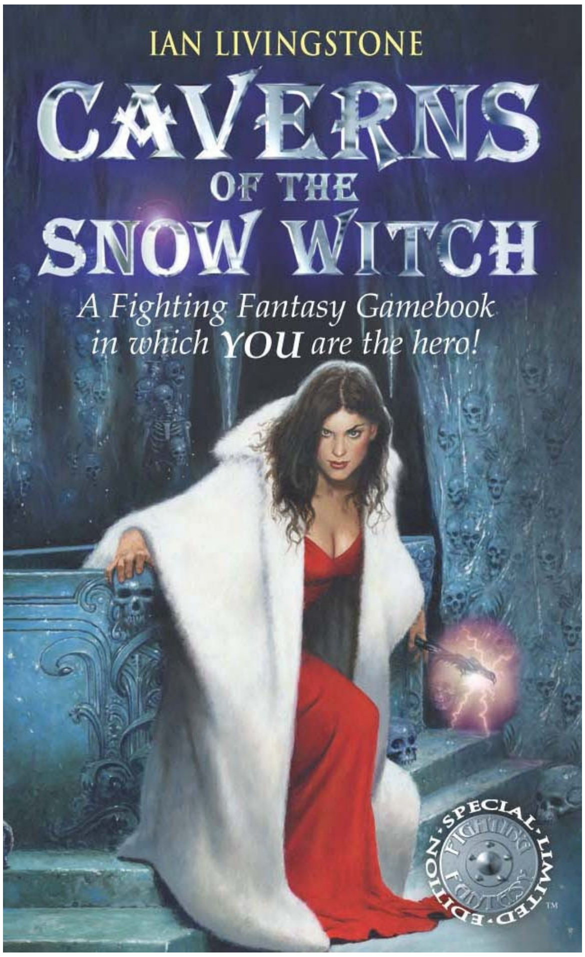
I didn't get frostbite, but had to eat two meals to regain my energy after the long walk in the snow. So after only turning the page five or six times, I was seven meals down. At this rate, I'd be looking forward to eating the Snow Witch, should I make it that far.

I made it to the Yeti, and the spear did almost nothing, but the dice were much kinder. I killed him with 6 STAMINA remaining. At this point the book said I considered returning to collect my reward, but chose to press on. Yeah, with 6 STAMINA points and two meals, I chose to head on. Thanks, book!



I then managed to avoid an avalanche through pure luck, and entered the caverns. The first person I met was a Goblin, who upon mentioning his desire to run away, was promptly killed *Battle Royale*-style by the 'obedience collar' around his neck. Then, to rub it in, I lost a LUCK point. Ian Livingstone wasn't mucking around when he wrote this book.

Remember reading your first *Fighting Fantasy* adventure? The desperate search for the items you need to win, the frantic dice rolls as you fight to stay in one piece mere paragraphs from your goal? **DAN SATHERLEY** recreates those tense moments by working his way through the series book by book and recording his efforts as he goes.


IAN LIVINGSTONE
CAVERNS OF THE SNOW WITCH
A Fighting Fantasy Gamebook in which YOU are the hero!
SPECIAL LIMITED EDITION
FIGHTING FANTASY

Eventually, I came across a room of 10 people worshipping an ice statue, and had three options – tell them I was going to play a magic flute for the Snow Witch (I didn't have one), fight them (err, no thanks) or try to just wander past. I tried the latter, and was caught by a whip and forced to fight the ice statue, which turned out to actually be a demon. Great... Somehow, through the use of luck, luck, and extremely lucky dice rolls, I came out of it alive, with a single STAMINA point left. The worshippers let me leave, thinking I must have the demon's powers now – yeah, a guy who'd die if on the receiving end of a dead-arm punch has the powers of a demon. Right... My reward, apart from a delayed inevitable death? One LUCK point. I was now up to three.

I then saved a Dwarf from a pit, and told him I was determined to press on into the cavern. Yup, with a single STAMINA point and no food, I was going to slay the greatest threat to Allansia apparently.

Ultimately, I was killed by an "ugly robed man" when he stabbed me in the shoulder. I'm not sure if it was he or his robes that were ugly, I'm not sure I would've cared, almost being a zombie and all.

I wasn't impressed by this book – at every turn, I was losing STAMINA or being asked to fight powerful opponents, right from the get-go, with no let up. I've read the book is quite interesting once you get past the Snow Witch, who apparently is dealt with inside the first half of the story, but getting there without a high SKILL roll is nigh on impossible.

Perhaps I'm just annoyed I rolled two sevens.

FF

COMING IN ISSUE #10

INTERVIEW:
BUILDING STRONG FOUNDATIONS

In the first part of the interview, *Fighting Fantasy* author **Paul Mason** talks about writing gamebooks for other series (including the one that got away; *Red Dragon Pass*), being a part of the *Warlock* team, and how he got started with this fantasy-shtick in the first place...

ARTICLE:
30 REASONS WHY WE ♥ FF

It's time for a birthday party! We help mark thirty years of *Fighting Fantasy* by celebrating thirty different things that we've all come to know and love about the series over the years. Stay tuned for weird food, violent deaths, and the subversion of clichés...

PLUS

EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW I LEARNT FROM READING FIGHTING FANTASY GAMEBOOKS / AELOUS RAVEN AND THE WRATH OF THE SEA-WITCH / CHRONICLE OF HEROES / FIGHTING FANTASY COLLECTOR / FIGHTING DANTASY